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THE NEW YORKER

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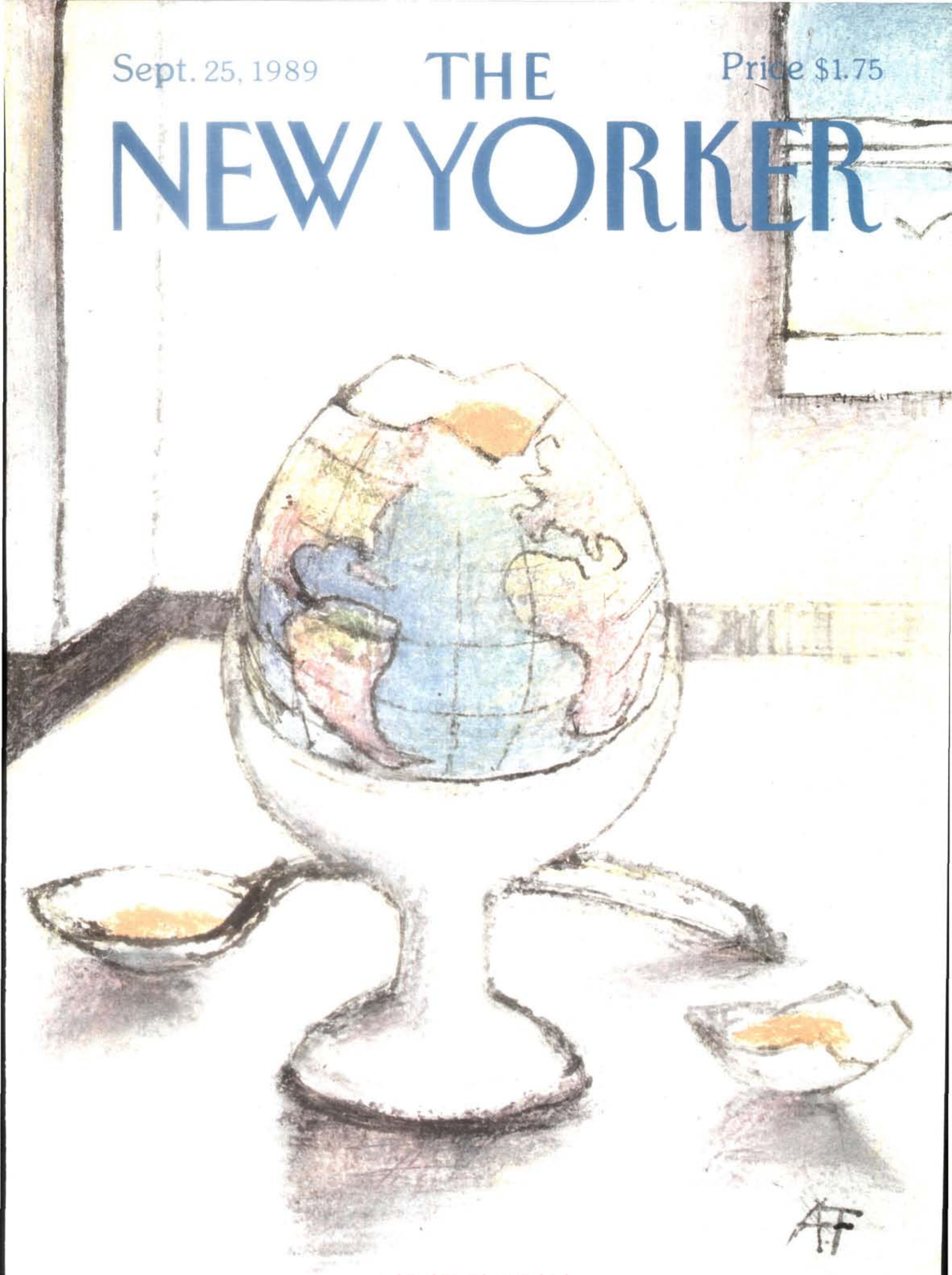

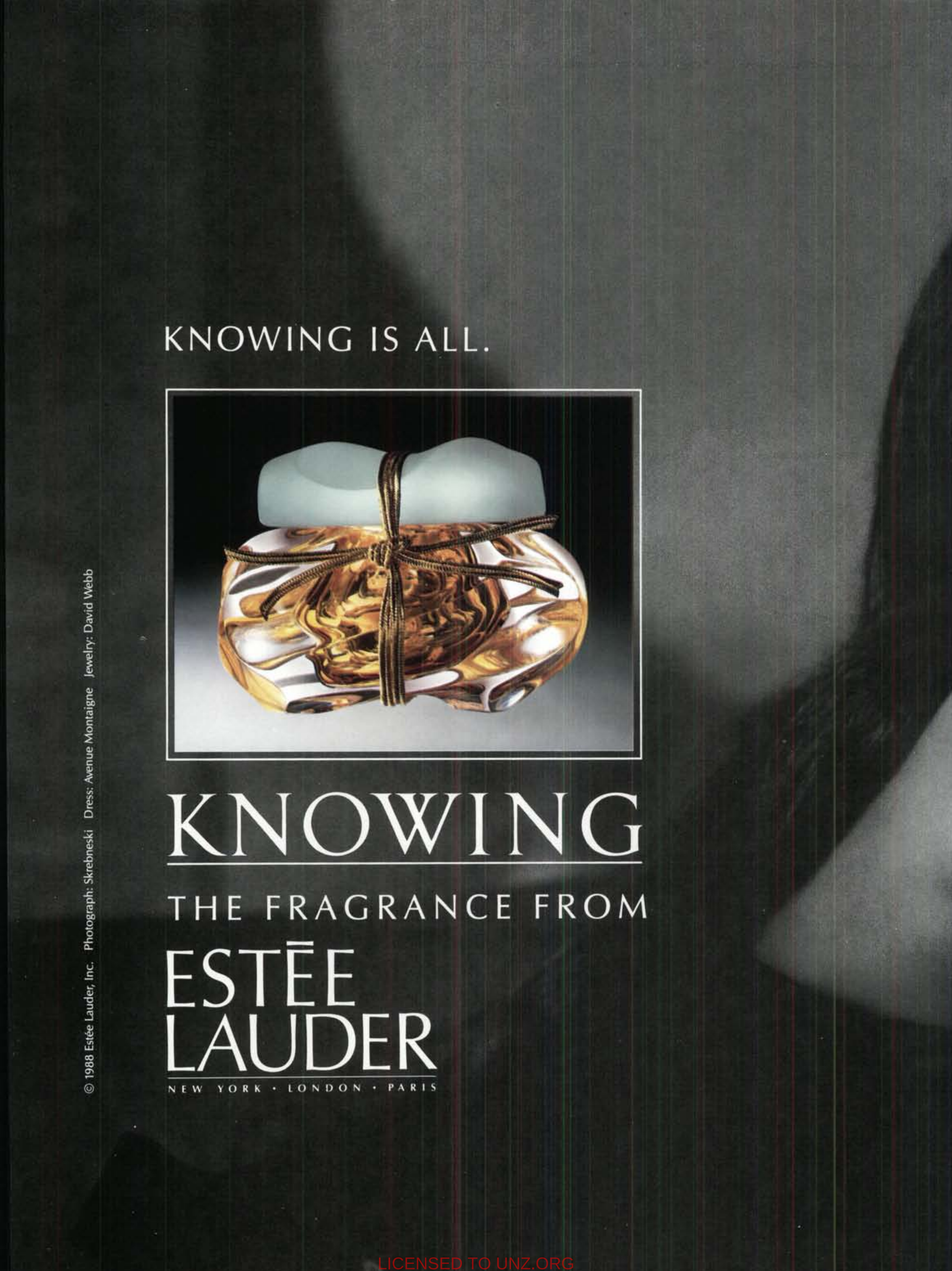
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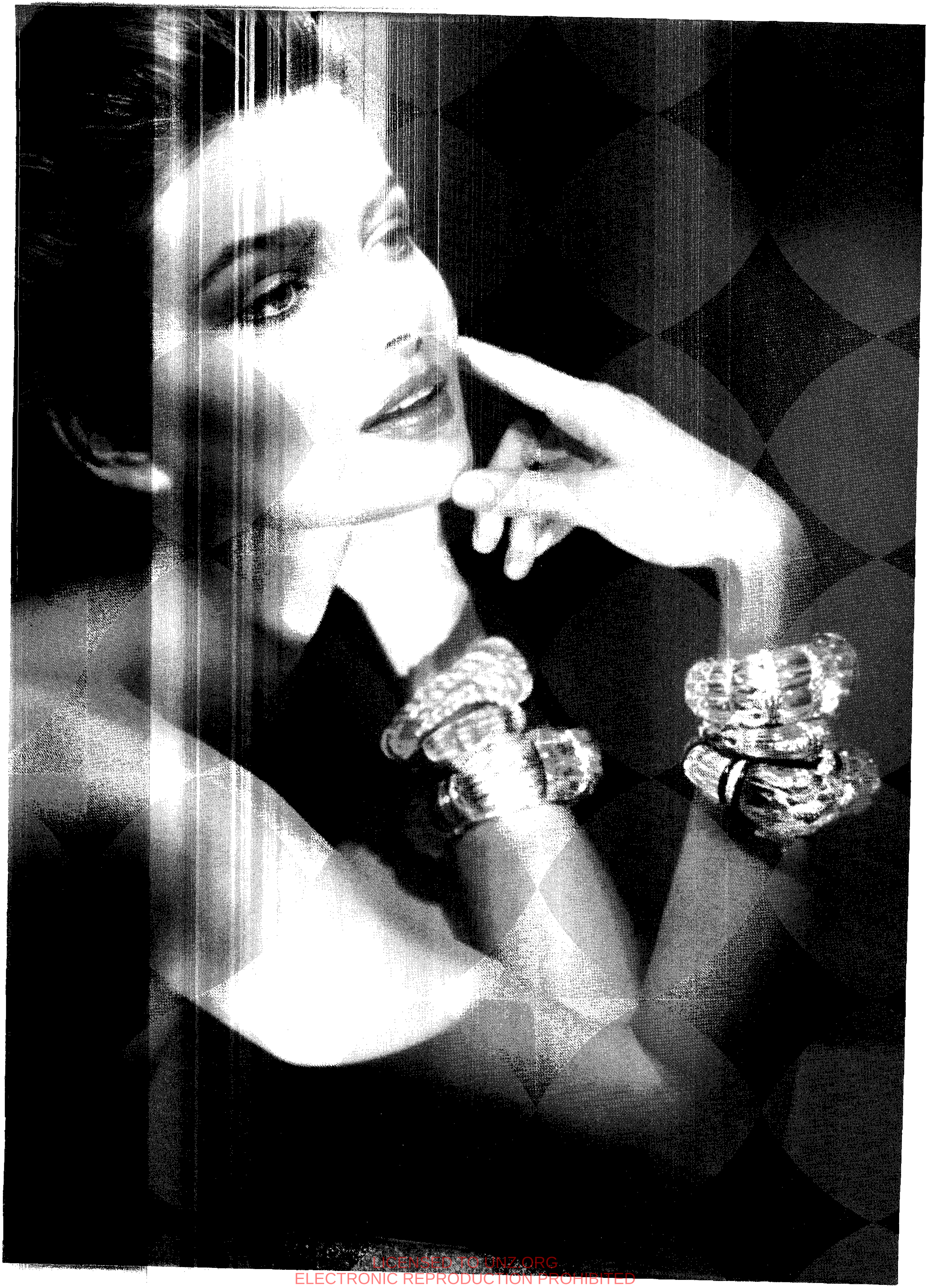

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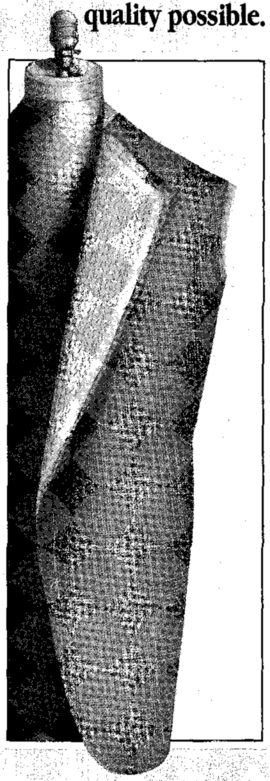

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

SEPTEMBER 25, 1989

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN 4

THE TALK OF THE TOWN 47

"THE LIFE AND LETTERS" (POEM) . . . . *Irving Feldman* 52

"ENDLESS RAPTURE" . . . . *Glen Baxter* 53

"NOTHING TO ASK FOR" . . . . *Dennis McFarland* 55

"DARK FLOWERS" (POEM) . . . . *Eavan Boland* 56

"IMMATURE TECHNOLOGY" (POEM) . . . . *Caroline Fraser* 60

REFLECTIONS (THE UNITED NATIONS AND WALDHEIM—PART I) . . *Shirley Hazzard* 63

MUSICAL EVENTS . . . . *Andrew Porter* 100

OUR FAR-FLUNG CORRESPONDENTS (VICKSBURG, MICHIGAN) . . . . *Sue Hubbell* 106

BOOKS . . . . *John Newhouse* 118
  BRIEFLY NOTED 121

COVER: *André François*

DRAWINGS: *Jack Ziegler, Lee Lorenz, Charles Barsotti, George Price, Roz Chast, Al Ross, Edward Frascino, Arnie Levin, J. B. Handelsman, Eldon Dedini, Tom Cheney, Warren Miller, Bernard Schoenbaum, David Jacobson, Michael Maslin, James Stevenson, Donald Reilly*

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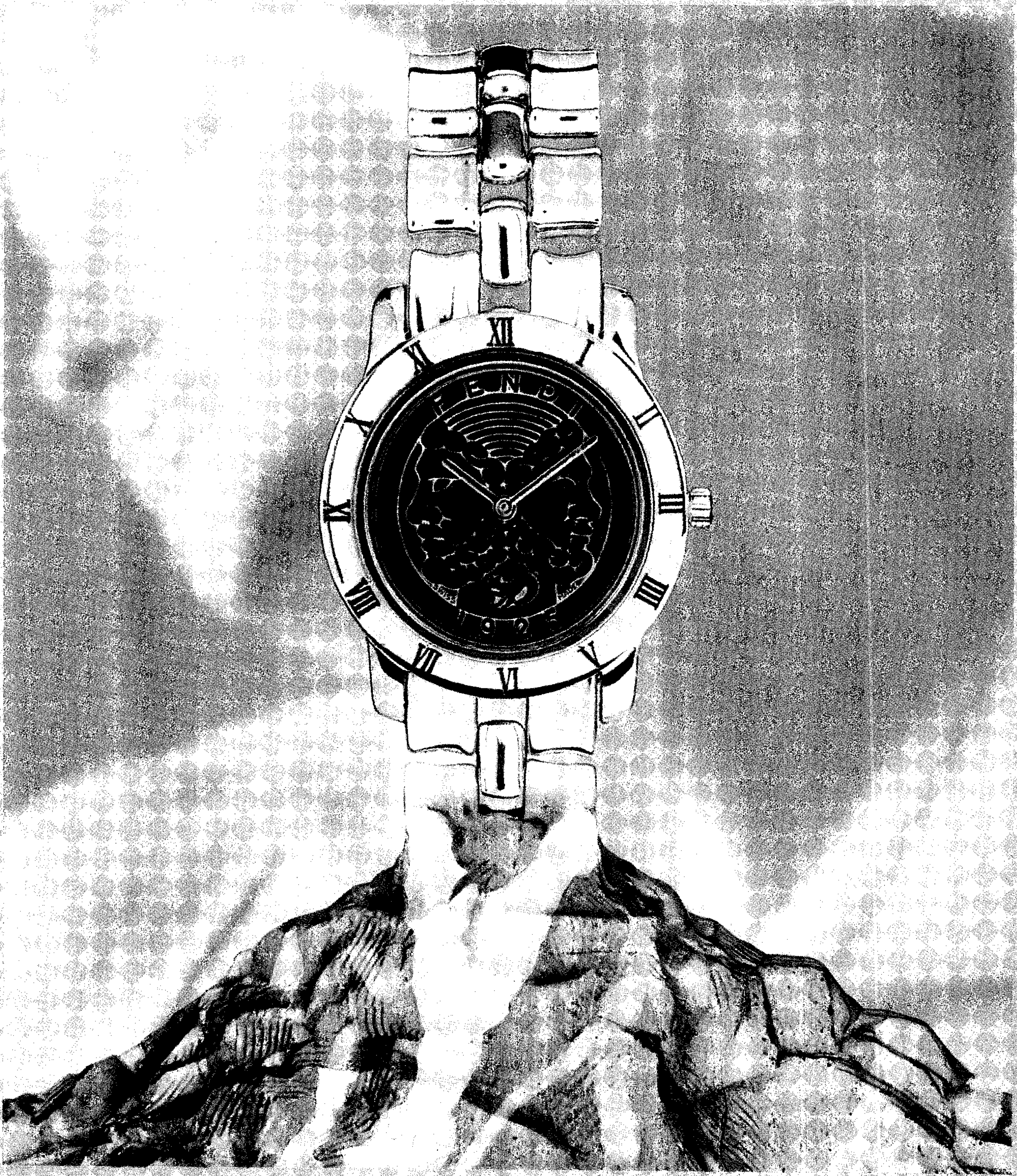

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

PAGING through *Theater Week* recently, we came upon a full-page ad for something called "The Broadway Celebrity Cookbook," edited by A. J. Vincent and published by Nautilus Books. We know a marketing ploy when we see one, and, thinking it a curious notion that anyone in this age of life-style cooking would be interested in the culinary tastes of celebrities, we ordered the book to see what it held in store.

"The Broadway Celebrity Cookbook" turns out to be a compilation of recipes from people connected with New York theatre: some more, like Harvey Fierstein (Szechuan cold noodles in sesame sauce) and Hal Linden (cheese-mustard loaf), and some less—like Debbie Reynolds (cheese enchiladas) and Orson Bean (New England red flannel hash). A few of the entries seemed to construe the idea of celebrity somewhat loosely: thus, in addition to contributions from Barbara Barrie (pureed vegetables), Michael Crawford (trifle), and Helen Hayes (curry mousse), we find recipes for chocolate mint brownies from Debra Bier, who "has been an assistant to Broadway director/choreographer Arthur Faria for the past eight years," and for carrot cake and banana nut bread from Catherine Ulissey, whose "magnetic style" won her spots on Broadway in "The Mystery of Edwin Drood," "Rags," and "The Phantom of the Opera."

Some of the recipes sound a little jingly—"Diller's Deli Potato Salad," for instance, or "The Bosco Antipasto." All the same, we're keeping an open mind. If Kenneth Elliott's recipe for glazed ham loaf is anything like his recipe for drag comedy (he directed Charles Busch in "The Lady in Question," currently at the Orpheum), the enterprise will not have been entirely in vain.

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedule and ticket information.)

The Aunts—Mia Dillon, Bethel Leslie, and Anne Wedgeworth in a play by Gary Bonasorte. In previews. (47th Street Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. 307-7171.)

The Man Who Shot Lincoln—A play by Luigi Creatore. Previews Sept. 19-20. Opens Sept. 21 at 6:45. (Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370.)

Mastergate—Larry Gelbart's satire of the Iran-Contra affair. Previews begin Sept. 22. (Criterion Center Stage Right, Broadway at 45th St. 239-6200.)

Midsummer Nights—A musical version of "A Midsummer Night's Dream," set in Laguna Beach in the nineteen-sixties. The book and lyrics are by Bryan D. Leys and the score is by Kevin Kuhn. Preview on Sept. 19. Opens Sept. 20 at 8, and will run through Oct. 1. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. 688-6022.)

Orpheus Descending—Vanessa Redgrave heads the cast of Peter Hall's production of the Tennessee Williams play. Previews through Sept. 23. Opens Sept. 24 at 7. (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 246-0102.)

The Secret Rapture—David Hare's play, which is still running in London, is now at the Public in a brief pre-Broadway engagement (through Sept. 27). The New York cast, directed by Mr. Hare, includes Blair Brown, Frances Conroy, and Mary Beth Hurt. (425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27			

Young Playwrights Festival—Four fully staged short plays by four writers in their teens—Robert Kerr, Janet Allard, Debra Neff, and Alejandro Membreno. Two are directed by Thomas Babe, and one each by Mary B. Robinson and Mark Brokaw. Previews Sept. 19-20. Opens Sept. 21 at 8. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

RECENTLY OPENED

Aristocrats—Brian Friel's portrait of the family of Judge O'Donnell, of Ballybeg Hall, in Donegal, is witty, ironic, and loving. Directed by Robin Lefèvre. (Reviewed in our issue of 5/8/89.) (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 246-0102. Closes Sept. 24.)

Black and Blue—An evening of classic blues and jazz, conceived, designed, and directed by Claudio Segovia and Hector Orezzoli, who created "Tango Argentino" in a similarly commemorative but far less visually opulent style. Musicians of renown have been assembled, and while Ruth Brown, Linda Hopkins, and Carrie Smith sing, Bunny Briggs, Jimmy Slyde, and a troupe of hoofers young and old give the tap-dance subculture a workout. (2/6/89, under Dancing.) (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 246-0102.)

Carnage, a Comedy—Straight from performances at the Edinburgh Festival comes this Actors' Gang production, which is directed by Tim Robbins, who also wrote the script (with Adam Simon). (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Closes Oct. 8.)

Hotel Martinique—A music-theatre piece by Kevin Malony that was inspired by Jonathan Kozol's 1988 articles on the homeless, published in this magazine. (Westbeth Theatre Center, 151 Bank St. 741-0391.)

Jerome Robbins' Broadway—A collection of high spots from "On the Town," "Billion Dollar Baby," "High Button Shoes," "The King and I," "Peter Pan," "West Side Story," "Gypsy," "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum," and "Fiddler on the Roof," all of which were choreographed or directed, or both, by Jerome Robbins. The evening is an orgy of family entertainment, a display of theatrical arts and crafts, and a canonization of Robbins and his era. Whether the fifties was your generation or your parents', this is the show for you. (3/13/89, under Dancing.) (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

The Kathy and Mo Show: Parallel Lives—Comedy skits and vignettes about gender and its role in society, written and performed by Kathy Najimy and Mo Gaffney. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394.)

The Lady in Question—Charles Busch's new play, set in Germany during the Second World War, is the perfect entertainment for a cool autumn evening. It's less pointedly a parody of one genre or movie than his last work, "Psycho Beach Party," was, and more a travesty of an entire week's worth of TNT programming, compressed into a single evening of theatre. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477.)

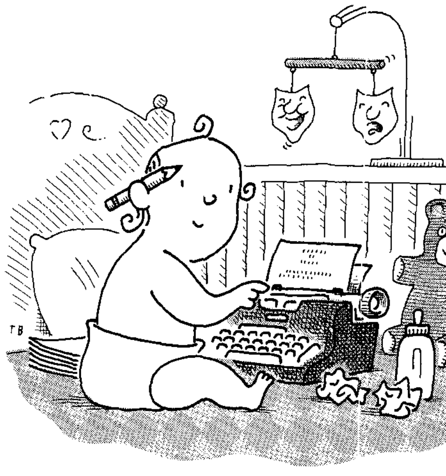
Lend Me a Tenor—The setting of this farce by Ken Ludwig is a hotel suite in Cleveland in 1934, where a famous tenor who is booked to sing "Otello" takes an overdose of barbiturates. A substitute must be found. Under Jerry Zaks' direction, all the surprises up the dramatist's sleeve are brought to comic life. Philip Bosco, Victor Garber, Tovah Feldshuh, J. Smith-Cameron, Ron Holgate, Jane Connell, and Jeff Brooks make up the splendid cast. (3/13/89) (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Love Letters—Staged readings of A. R. Gurney's two-character play. Sept. 19-24, Jane Curtin and Edward Herrmann; Sept. 26-Oct. 1, Colleen Dewhurst and Josef Sommer. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)

Only Kidding!—Jim Geoghan's comedy about standup comedians, in all their panic and desperation, has the ring of authenticity, and jokes that invariably pay off. (One monologue, about a Greek restaurant, is a knockout.) The characters are an aging Catskills type; a young comedy team still scrambling for a foothold; a jumpy writer; and a beef-brained manager. All the actors do well, under the lively direction of Larry Arrick. (5/29/89) (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394.)

Other People's Money—Jerry Sterner's comedy about a New York stockbroker's attempt to take over a decorous New England business maintains its suspense from beginning to end. Kevin Conway can seldom have been better or funnier than he is as Bronx-born Lawrence Garfinkle. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000.)

Privates on Parade—Peter Nichols' satiric and profound comedy with music (book and lyrics by Nichols, score by Denis King) about a troupe of entertainers, assigned to the British Army in Malaysia in 1948. Jim Dale outdoes himself as the principal singer and dancer of the troupe, and Simon Jones is fine, too, as his commanding officer. Directed by Larry Carpenter. (9/4/89) (Roundabout, 100 E. 17th St. 420-1883.)



Young Playwrights Festival

Shirley Valentine—Willy Russell's play about a Liverpool housewife who, feeling herself engulfed by drab domesticity, flies off to Greece, where she finds a temporary lover and lives happily ever after. With Ellen Burstyn in the title, and only, role. Directed by Simon Callow. (2/27/88) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

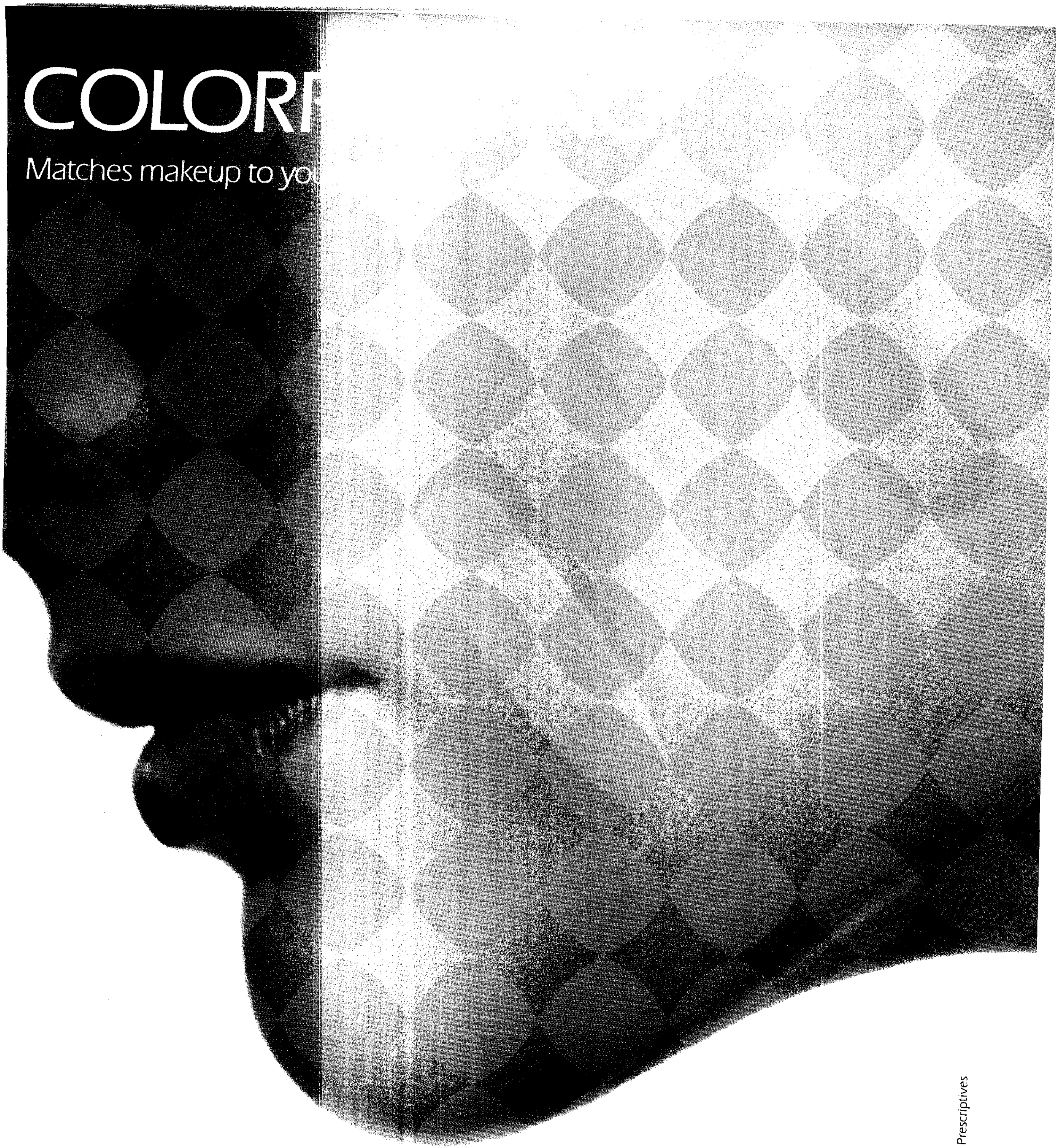
Showing Off—As comedy revues go, this one—written by Douglas Bernstein and Denis Markell—isn't at all bad. The winning performances by Mr. Bernstein, Marilyn Pasekoff, Mark Sawyer, and Valerie Wright often make the material seem better than it is, but ultimately they don't compensate for the over-all smugness of what is essentially life-style comedy. (Steve McGraw's, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400.)

Soul Survivor—A comedy by Anthony Bruno, with Jack Wrangler. (Sanford Meisner, 164 Eleventh Ave., at 22nd St. 869-3530. Closes Oct. 1.)

Sweeney Todd—Bob Gunton and Beth Fowler in the York Theatre Company's production of the Sondheim musical, which had a brief run uptown last spring. Susan H. Schulman is the director. (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200.)

LONG RUNS

cats: Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to John Napier's sets and costumes. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-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Last year, people spotted pine squirrels, mule deer, raccoons, ptarmigans, porcupines, voles, snowshoe hares, pine martens, elk, red fox, bighorn sheep, long tail ermine, chickarees, mountain cottontails, striped skunks, Clark's nutcrackers, yellowbelly marmots, coyotes, and even a deer mouse or two.

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THE THEATRE—Cont'd

6200.) . . . **A CHORUS LINE:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200.) . . . **DRIVING MISS DAISY:** Frances Sternhagen and Earle Hyman star in Alfred Uhry's play, which tells of the growing attachment of a cranky old woman in Atlanta to her black chauffeur. Directed by Ron Lagomarsino. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** The longest-running long run turned twenty-nine this year. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838.) . . . **FORBIDDEN BROADWAY 1989:** A source of continual merriment, this revue is a cluster of parodies of shows along the Great White Way. Gerard Alessandrini conceived and directed it, and wrote the witty, barbed lyrics. The performers are Toni DiBuono, Karen Murphy, David B. McDonald, and Michael McGrath. (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.) . . . **THE HEIDI CHRONICLES:** Wendy Wasserstein's play looks at first glance like standard baby-boom playwriting fare, but some alchemical combination of graceful-mindedness and good writing enables her to capture, lampoon, and transcend her generation all at the same time. With Christine Lahti. (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.) . . . **I COULD GO ON LIP-SYNCHING!:** This one-man variety show made up of cultural arcana is kind of weird, kind of quirky, and kind of brilliant. Performed by John Epperson and written by him and Justin Ross (who directed), it uses the rhetorical tactics of drag theatre to attack some of the Big Questions, managing not so much to raise lip-synching to an art as to transform aural montage into psychodrama. (Theatre Off Park, 224 Waverly Pl., at 11th St. 627-2556. Closes Sept. 23.) . . . **M. BUTTERFLY:** David Henry Hwang's funny, mysterious, and often beautiful play. With Tony Randall and B. D. Wong. A. Mapa takes over Wong's role starting Sept. 25. (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220.) . . . **ME AND MY GIRL:** An infelicitously rehabilitated British musical out of the thirties. With James Brennan and Judy Blazer. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 246-0102.) . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** The stars of this musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel are John Napier's settings and David Hersey's lighting. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200.) . . . **NUNSENSE:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321.) . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** The much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets, everything about the show is negligible. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.) . . . **RUMORS:** This farce about a party to celebrate a couple's tenth anniversary (the host and hostess are mysteriously absent) may well be the funniest play that Neil Simon has written. It is acted to perfection by, among others, Ron Leibman, Joyce Van Patten, Charles Brown, and Cynthia Darlow, under the impeccable direction of Gene Saks. (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.) . . . **STEEL MAGNOLIAS:** This first play by Robert Harling is set in a beauty shop in a small town in Louisiana and consists mainly of the often amusing, wisecracking chatter of the proprietress (Suzy Hunt), her assistant (Dorrie Joiner), and four steady customers (Rita Gardner, Rica Martens, Anna Minot, and Cynthia Vance). (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 246-0102.)

RAISE YOUR HAND

School bells ring, and it's back to The Urban Center (457 Madison Avenue), where "New Schools for New York," a design project sponsored by the Architectural League and the Public Education Association, begins this fall. The project is an open invitation to architects to come up with designs for small neighborhood schools in six New York City locations, and to think about buildings as teachers: what motivates learning, how built form can foster it, how a school's relationship to its site can affect the lives of children and their community—to think, ultimately, about hope.

History class is now in session at The Urban Center's third-floor galleries, where the League has mounted an exhibition on representative school-building types from the mid-nineteenth century to the present.

DANCE

EARLY this year, a group of dancers and singers drawn from several tribes native to Siberia appeared at the Asia Society. Theirs was an intimate art, small-scale and understated, and when they conjured up nature it was closer to the world of Thoreau than to the great ritual dramas associated with many of the Native American tribes whose Siberian ancestors emigrated through Alaska to what is now the United States mainland during the Stone Age.

While the Siberians were here, they had a chance to meet Native American dancers from several tribes, at a powwow co-sponsored by the Asia Society and the American Indian Community House, in Manhattan, with which the Native American dancers were affiliated. As part of the event, performances were held in a long conference room at the Asia Society. First, the Siberians sang, danced, and playacted; the tight, irregular space constricted them slightly, but they easily adjusted to it. Then the Native Americans performed: the difference was dramatic. It was not only that much of their dancing called for a large circle involving all the dancers—a formation that was difficult to achieve in that room—but also that all the dances took enormous expanses of clear space as a given. Even though, moment by moment, an individual's steps seemed reined in, the group configurations were obviously made to be observed from a distance or a high vantage point. The dancers were involved in making a spectacle; their movement emphasized geometry, and sometimes verged on pure pattern—on abstraction. One ached to watch great practitioners of this movement in vast natural settings, or knowingly positioned for the proscenium stage. We will be interested to see the theatrical solutions devised by the American Indian Dance Theatre, a two-year-old company with dancers from sixteen tribes, on the stage of the Joyce Theatre, where they will perform September 19 through October 1.

AMERICAN INDIAN DANCE THEATRE—A company of twenty-five dancers, singers, and musicians. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Sept. 19-20 at 7:30; Sept. 21-22 at 8; Sept. 23 at 2 and 8; Sept. 24 at 2 and 7:30; and Sept. 26-27 at 8. Through Oct. 1.)

SLASK—The national folk ballet of Poland. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. Sept. 19-22 at 8, Sept. 23 at 2 and 8, and Sept. 24 at 3.)

RACHEL LIST & COMPANY—A program of contemporary dance and Appalachian clogging. (Marymount Manhattan Theatre, 221 E. 71st St. Sept. 22-23 at 8, and Sept. 24 at 3. For information about tickets, call 877-3399.)

KALANIDHI NARAYANAN ENSEMBLE—In classical dances of southern India. (Uris Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 81st St. Sept. 24 at 2:30. For tickets, call 206-1050.)

DOROTHY JUNGELS' EVERETT DANCE THEATRE—A Providence, Rhode Island, group in a program of works inspired by the Wright Brothers and Amelia Earhart. (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Sept. 25-26 at 8.)

NOTE—"Dancing in the Streets" will present dance works by Elizabeth Streb, Doug Elkins and Ellen Cornfield, and the Margolis-Brown Adaptors; an installation by Christopher Janney; and music by the Microscopic Septet, on the Coney Island boardwalk, Sept. 23 at 1 and 4.

DESIRE

Since we think fall is the most romantic time of the year, our heart went pit-a-pat when we unwrapped our copy of a new book, by Paula Begoun, called "The Best Places to Kiss in New York City." Some of our favorite spots are listed here, like the little park at Sutton Place, with its dreamy vista of the Queensboro Bridge (two kisses out of a possible four, according to the book's osculatory rating system); Café des Artistes, with its loads of luscious Howard Chandler Christy murals, two-and-a-half smacks; and the top-rated Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, with its views this season of birds migrating south. What we'd like to see now, though, is a sequel about New York places where kisses are most needed: the mayoral-campaign debate platform, the Penn Station ticket line at rush hour, the U.N. General Assembly, Bensonhurst.

NIGHT LIFE

IF you head west on Prospect Avenue, in Brooklyn—past signs for both Defender Dogs and the World-Wide Exterminating Corporation—you'll find a brown-shingled row house whose neon "BAR" beacon lights up the block between Sixth and Seventh Avenues. In the basement of this row house, you'll find Lauterbach's Brooklyn Beat. Lauterbach's, which advertises itself as "the type of club the rock world needs most," is a grungy, well-intentioned canteen dedicated to homegrown Brooklyn bands. It is the place to go if you want to see Chemical Wedding or Formaldehyde Blues Train or When People Were Shorter and Lived Near the Water.

We visited Lauterbach's recently, took in a set by a speed-metal collective called Wrecked Creation, and bought a copy of the club's compilation album, "Today Brooklyn; Tomorrow the World." The album's cover shows a fat guy dozing in a dozer cap, and its liner notes include this assessment of Lauterbach's décor: "Like all the best rock clubs in the world, it's not pretty." No, we'd have to agree, it's *not.* The emphasis here is on exposed cement, although one wall is decorated with Polaroids—"St. Patty's 1986" (people in green hats and leis), "New Year's 1988-89" (people in red hats and leis). Lauterbach's microwave menu is surprisingly varied (shepherd's pie, chicken parmigiana), and its house wine is Bud in the can.

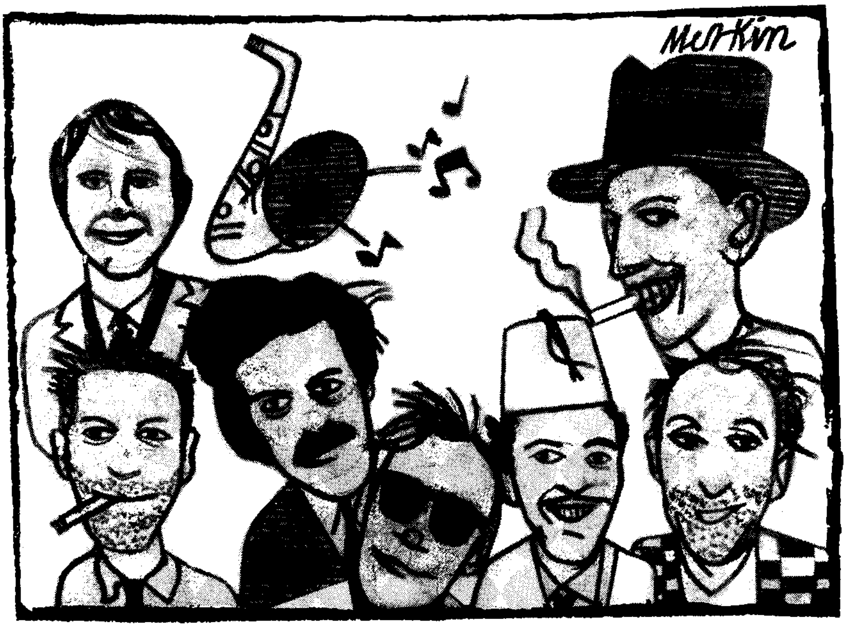
Very few people go to Lauterbach's to dine, of course. Whether or not you agree with the prevailing sentiment here that Manhattan has had it, Lauterbach's supports bands—a *lot* of bands—that are funny, earnest, on the edge, or looking for a place to play. On the evening of our visit, one of Wrecked Creation's guitarists came up to the mike between numbers and asked, rather shyly, "Anybody like this shit?" We weren't the only one to shout, "Yeah."

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

ALGONQUIN HOTEL, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—The Houston-based vocal trio **MONTGOMERY, PLANT & STRITCH** will be the first act to perform in the newly refurbished Oak Room (new oak, a higher, acoustically superior ceiling, and more renovations to come, here and elsewhere in the hotel) Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine-fifteen, and Fridays and Saturdays at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen. Dining.

ARTHUR'S TAVERN, 57 Grove St. (675-6879)—Thirty-year-olds in love call Mabel Godwin "a *scandal.*" Now in her seventies, she remains a singer of racy jazz numbers, a devout chatterer, a wearer of gold lamé suits, and a pianist who perks along quite nicely to the accompaniment of a snare and a standup bass. Ms. Godwin performs Thursdays through Saturdays from nine-thirty. On Sundays, cornettist **LEE LORENZ** leads the Creole Cookin' Jazz Band, and on Mondays the Grove Street Stompers do their Dixieland thing. Arthur's is currently decorated for the holidays—Christmas, New Year's, Halloween, and St. Patrick's Day.

BIRDLAND, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—A fledgling jazz operation that could easily be mistaken for a yuppie bar. The scenery includes waiters and waitresses in Reeboks and bow ties, some trees, a rainbow-colored Wurlitzer jukebox, and some nice-looking neon wading birds. Pianist **LYNN BERNSTEIN** presides on Sept. 19; sax man **BOBBY WATSON** appears Sept. 22-23; and bassist **CHIP JACKSON'S** trio works out on Sept. 26, with **MEL LEWIS.** Music from nine Sundays through Thursdays, and from nine-thirty Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.



The Microscopic Septet at the Knitting Factory

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A glitzy, color-coördinated jazz house, designed for maximum seating efficiency, where blue-suspendered waitresses sweep by your table bearing shrimp cocktails, champagne, and other trappings of the good life. After the show, out-of-towners flock to the upstairs souvenir shop, where, at last check, Blue Note golf balls were still available. The **YELLOWJACKETS,** a jazz-fusion group, take the stage Sept. 19-24. A double feature billed as "Heavyweight Contenders" kicks off on Sept. 26: pianist **LES MC CANN** with saxophonist **EDDIE HARRIS;** and organist **JIMMY MC GRIFF** with saxophonist **HANK CRAWFORD.** Music from nine. Dining.

BRADLEY'S, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A Village bar that has long featured first-rate piano-bass teams and pro conversationalists and that now also features Bradley's T-shirts, Bradley's sweatshirts, Bradley's customized coasters, a person to take an admission fee, and a person to seat you and shush you. It's an institution. Saxophonist **JUNIOR COOK'S** trio holds forth through Sept. 23. They will be followed by a trio consisting of **DANNY MOORE** (trumpet), **HAROLD MABERN** (piano), and **MICHAEL FORMANEK** (bass) on Sept. 24. The piano-bass team of **JOANNE BRACKEEN** and **CECIL MC BEE** begins a six-night stand on Sept. 25. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

CARLYLE HOTEL, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The pastel uptown spa known as the Café Carlyle is home to **JULIE WILSON,** a singer who's not opposed to tucking a gardenia behind her ear, Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in the Bemelmans Bar, the singer **RONNY WHYTE**—who usually slips a few songs of his own in amid all the Cole Porter and Stephen Sondheim—presides at the piano from nine-forty-five Tuesdays through Saturdays.

CAT CLUB, 76 E. 13th St. (505-0090)—This room, which caters to thrash-metal buffs and cooler heads on weeknights, opens its doors on Sundays to swing-music fans, most of whom come to Lindy. Feet jitter, skirts fly, and a limber, nattily dressed gent gets a look on his face that says "Watch my next move, darlin'." Up by the stage, two men who have come stag scatter their feet when the band breaks into "Jumpin' at the Woodside." The New York Swing Dance Society organizes these Sunday-night meetings; on Sept. 24, it presents Stan Rubin and his fifteen-piece outfit. Music from eight to midnight.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—In the late seventies and early eighties, this dark cave (graffitied walls, a battered pool table, rest rooms for the intrepid only) was the hub of a thriving punk-music scene—Blondie, Talking Heads, the Ramones, and Television were regular attractions. Local rock has since diminished, but while other clubs of the era (notably Max's Kansas City) have fizzled, CB's perseveres, and young hopefuls continue to fill the stage nightly. **STRANGE CAVE,** a pop-rock band that boasts uncanned strings, a solid rhythm section, and the lyrical musings of ex-Bongo James Maestro, is here on Sept. 20; **CRUEL STORY OF YOUTH** headlines on Sept. 22. Music from nine-thirty Sundays through Thursdays and from ten-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays.

DAN LYNCH, 221 Second Ave., at 14th St. (677-0911)—Outside Dan Lynch, you'll come across a lot of suspicious characters who'll claim to know you; inside you'll find a pupil-dilating, brown-on-brown bar decorated with an Aretha Franklin poster and remnants of a birch tree. The place brightens up considerably at ten with a variety of live blues, including vamps of the "put on your red dress" variety.

DELTA 88, 332 Eighth Ave., at 26th St. (924-3499)—A pleasant hangout for white-collar trash, where you'll find cold Dixie beer, collard greens, and plenty of men who know how to wear a leather vest. As if that weren't enough, the bar-and-restaurant also features a corrugated-tin ceiling and a truckload of sort-of-Southern items: a photo booth, a giant Amoco sign, an Evel Knievel lunchbox. Most nights, the buffet turns into a bandstand at nine, with, for instance, gospel on Mondays and blues on Tuesdays. The zydeco outfit **LOUP GAROU** is on the premises on Thursdays. Sometimes, if you're lucky, you'll hear authentic country songs about Queens. Shows after nine. Chicken-fried steak, deep-fried crawdads (a.k.a. Cajun popcorn), and other exotic Southern fare.

FAT TUESDAY'S, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—A low-ceilinged, belowstairs jazz room, its walls decorated with alternating bands of mirror and red plush, which will seem intimate to some people and too intimate to tall people, who may want to remove their top hats before entering. **BILL EVANS,** a tenor saxophonist who made a name for himself while under the wing of Miles Davis, comes in with a "Super Band" in tow Sept. 19-24. Keyboard player **ONAJE ALLAN GUMBS** and his quintet have a five-day stint beginning Sept. 26. Mondays remain in the capable hands of **LES PAUL,** the guitarist, guitar-builder, and overdubbing pioneer. Music from eight. Dining.

FORTUNE GARDEN PAVILION, 209 E. 49th St. (753-0101)—Chinese food served in a plush greenhouse setting. Through the glass roof, which supports a jungle of potted greenery, you can admire the fruits of the midtown real-estate boom and, when available, the moon. A

NIGHT LIFE—Cont'd

Steinway grand is encamped in the middle of the room, making things tricky for the waiters but improving the over-all quality of life. **KENNY BARRON** sits down at the bench Sept. 19-24, and pianist **KIRK LIGHTSEY** and vibist **TEDDY CHARLES** get under way on Sept. 26. Music from eight Mondays through Saturdays, and from seven on Sundays.

Greene Street, 101 Greene St. (925-2415)—This is such a gorgeous, thirties-ish movie-set of a place, you expect gunmen to burst in at any moment. The restaurant and bar—forested and twilit—is about the size of a football field, with the piano at the fifty-yard line. If your seats are good enough, you'll hear some able entertainers, including **VLADIMIR SHAFRANOV** Sept. 19-23.

Jan Wallman's, 49 W. 44th St. (764-8930)—A room fit for a singer, an accompanist or two, and a party of forty-eight. On Sept. 21, **DOUG ANDROS** holds forth with a trio led by pianist-in-residence **WES MC AFFEE; BARBARA LEA,** a free and easy singer with a whistle that could knock a bird out of a tree, performs on Sept. 23; and **ALEX BENNETT KAHN** comes in on Sept. 27. Shows at nine and eleven. Dining. Closed Sundays.

Knickerbocker, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A busy bar-and-grill in the piano-bass district. **JUDY CARMICHAEL,** a fine, cheery stride pianist and a regular here, performs Tuesdays through Saturdays with saxophonist **MICHAEL HASHIM.**

Knitting Factory, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—A second-floor music and performance space, where people come to ponder the meaning of harmolodics and the post-ness of postmodernism. The room is run by two amiable young guys from Wisconsin, whose views on such things as cover charges are enlightened. The **DAVE HOLLAND** quartet steps in Sept. 19-20, and **THE ORDINAIRES,** whose repertoire includes an endearingly frightful version of Led Zeppelin's "Kashmir," are here Sept. 22-23. Mondays belong to the **MICROSCOPIC SEPTET,** practitioners of downtown-style ensemble jazz: spirited genre-mixing and plenty of wit. Music after nine.

Ritz, 254 W. 54th St. (541-8900)—This rock establishment, which recently moved from the East Village to the former temple of excess Studio 54, is still a place where the customer is not always right. The signature of the previous address, the giant Big Brother video screen, has been preserved intact. Upstairs in the balcony, there are designated seating areas for industry and non-industry people. **FELA KUTI,** a Nigerian musician and onetime political hopeful (he ran in his country's 1979 presidential race), will be here on Sept. 23. He and his football-team-size band serve up a combination of James Brown-style funk and traditional African music. The British band **LOVE AND ROCKETS,** who play a kind of neo-psychedelic rock, take the stage Sept. 26-27. Shows begin at nine Sundays through Thursdays, and at eleven Fridays and Saturdays.

Sounds of Brazil, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A big, cheerful room, painted a light tropical blue, where you can pick 'em up and set 'em down to sounds from Brazil, Africa, the Caribbean, and elsewhere. **ASTRUD GILBERTO,** a Brazilian bossa-nova singer best known for her 1963 recording of "The Girl from Ipanema," is in charge Sept. 18-19. The rest of the schedule: Sept. 20-21, the reggae singer **YELLOWMAN;** the Haitian dance band **TABOU COMBO** on Sept. 22; the samba outfit **PÉ-DE-BOI** on Sept. 23; two Japanese reggae bands, Mute Beat and Nahki, on Sept. 26; and Thomas Mapfumo and Bembeya on Sept. 27. Music from nine Tuesdays through Thursdays, and from ten Fridays and Saturdays. Dining. Closed Mondays.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—An itinerary stop for the international jazz groupies who, on any given night, can be seen roaming the streets of the Village. Up front, there's a glass-enclosed sidewalk café; in back is a larger room, with a pressed-tin ceiling, red brick, and more pinewood than a ski lodge. **ART BLAKEY,** who has done his bit for jazz in general and the high hat in particular, will be here with his **JAZZ MESSENGERS** Sept. 19-24; guitarist **JOHN SCOFIELD** starts up on Sept. 26. The electrified big band of the late Gil Evans, now under the direction of his son, the trumpeter Miles Evans, is in action on Mondays. Tee-off time is ten. Dining.

Sweetwaters, 170 Amsterdam Ave., at 67th St. (873-4100)—Pink carnations on the tables, shrimp creole on the menu, a sunken dance floor with a "Saturday Night Fever" ball, and a house photographer who offers to take a picture of you and your honey. The stage, dominated by a white grand piano, is usually given over to soul and R. & B.; the audience shouts encouragement as the band sings about "doin' it all night long" and, a little later, about "taking care of that thing." There's a lively bar, too, separated from the dining room by tinted glass.

Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—In the downstairs room, which is as big and plain as a mess hall, Mondays after nine are set aside for salsa groups. **TANIA MARIA,** a Brazilian singer equally at home with jazz and Latin music, descends the stairs Sept. 22-23. Sets at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Perhaps the most famous basement in the world, now in its second half century, this establishment was once described by the late Max Gordon as "a good joint that people like to come to—thank God." The shifty guitarist **BILL FRISELL** performs in a quartet—**HANK ROBERTS,** cello; **KERMIT DRISCOLL,** bass; and **JOEY BARON,** drums—Sept. 19-24. Pianist **STEVE KUHN,** who tinkered around in Stan Getz's jazz laboratory a few decades back, has an engagement here beginning Sept. 26. Mondays are reserved for the **MEL LEWIS** big band. Music after ten.

Zanzibar & Grill, 550 Third Ave., at 36th St. (779-0606)—A Murray Hill jazz resort, where the ceiling fans turn slowly, and the palm trees susurrate tropically, and the jukebox contains Xavier Cugat and Perez Prado, and a waiter, delivering a plate of fried chicken and maple-pear corn bread to a customer, sings "It's suppertime" (to the tune of "Summertime," of course). The professional musicians usually appear on the premises at around nine o'clock. This week, the bandleaders include: trumpeters **SPANKY DAVIS** (Sept. 24) and **VALERY PONOMAREV** (Sept. 25), and pianist **RICHARD WYANDS** (Sept. 26-27).

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A spacious, lightly forested bar and restaurant with an in-between room from which music issues, putting an end to some discussions and inspiring others. **JUNIOR MANCE,** onetime Dinah Washington sidekick and author of "How to Play Blues Piano," will be here with bassist **MARTY RIVERA** until Sept. 23. On Sept. 25, pianist **KENNY BARRON** and bassist **PAUL WEST** begin a six-day stay. Music from eight weeknights and Sundays from seven.

Tania Maria at the Village Gate

EDGE OF NIGHT LIFE

It was a tense situation on the corner of Eighth Avenue and 55th Street late at night on September 7. Not because of the asbestos scare on the E, C, and A trains, underground—the people aboveground couldn't have cared less about that. They had another problem. They couldn't find the "outlaw party."

For those who have never been to an outlaw party: as long as it lasts it's usually a blast. Outlaw parties occur, seemingly spontaneously (but the fully stocked bars and the professional sound systems betray some careful planning), on, say, the pedestrian path of the Williamsburg Bridge, or in an abandoned subway station. The settings are always fabulous. The music is always fabulous. The crowd also is fabulous. But the life of an outlaw party is short. The party usually starts around eleven o'clock and is over within an hour (or sometimes as quickly as one's black shoes can get scuffed), not because the liquor runs out but because there is no permit to be there. Consequently, the police are stuck with one of Judy Holliday's roles—singing "The Party's Over."

Getting to the party before it's gone is all part of the game. The problem, as we say, is finding it. Being one of the links in the network of calls that precede an outlaw event certainly helps. But, as in the old game of telephone, once information becomes secondhand the specifics lose precision. Since there is no central number to call for verification, at the appointed hour wandering can begin. "Patty said it was in a parking garage on the corner," moaned one exasperated girl. "There's one," said her friend, pointing to the basement of an apartment house. But the garage gate was closed. Some people ran down to an open-air lot on West 50th Street, but the only noise there was a man screaming at an attendant for eating in the man's car. Others, in rolled-up denim cutoffs, wandered through the multilevels of a nearby municipal garage, ears cocked for music. Some thought they heard something. But it was coming from the new Ritz, next door. "What are we going to do?" wailed one sad-eyed waif, her eyeliner already smudged. Her friend offered an alternative: "We could go home." "Never!" screamed the waif. "I just couldn't now." Her friend should have known better. True outlaws can never go home.

IN ANOTHER CATEGORY—PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

"The One That Got Away"—A music-theatre piece about love, madness, and fishing presented by the Front Lawn, a three-member group from Auckland, New Zealand. (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Sept. 21-23 at 8, and Sept. 24 at 3. Through Oct. 1.)

"Frank Dell's The Temptation of St. Antony"—This Wooster Group production, performed by seven live actors and three more on video, is, according to a Wooster Group spokesperson, "about death or about the end of something." Critics have called it "multimedia vaudeville" and "a Dadaist collage." With Ron Vawter, Peyton Smith, Jeff Webster, Kate Valk, and others. (Performing Garage, 33 Wooster St. 966-3651. Thursdays through Sundays at 8.)

Siegfried & Roy—For years a top draw in Vegas, these two illusionists (who met on the luxury liner Bremen) are here for a three-week engagement. They'll shoot a lepjag (not a new economy car, but a feline hybrid) out of a cannon, turn a beautiful woman into a six-hundred-pound white tiger, and make other beautiful women and rare cats disappear before your eyes. The first performance is Sept. 22 at 7:30. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. For information about schedules and tickets, call 757-3100.)

David Leslie—Screening two programs of films of his past stunts, which include attempting to leap over a mountain of melons, walking around Chinatown in a suit made of firecrackers, and boxing on the Staten Island ferry. (The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793. Sept. 25 at 8:30 and 9:30.)

P.S. 122—Sept 21-24 at 9:30: Frank Maya in rants about Liza Minnelli, Entenmann's baked goods, and his shrink. Through Oct. 1. . . . ¶ Sept. 22-24 at 8: "Blue Man," a performance group consisting of three men who are completely bald and completely blue. . . . ¶ Sept. 22-23 at 11: Leigh Clark re-creates her character LuRain Penny, an aging torch singer. Through Sept. 30. (150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288.)

ART

THIS is a diffuse beginning of a season, though one marked perhaps by a certain emphasis on the three-dimensional (straight sculpture had been enjoying a bit of a renaissance, anyway, when Jeff Koons' oversize figurines appeared last winter, inviting a flood of reënvisioned tchotchkes and decontextualized *objets*), but an exhibition of work by Petah Coyne, at the Jack Shainman Gallery, stands out like a Kansas twister on a smooth summer day. Coyne made a strong solo début in 1987, at the Sculpture Center, with work—somewhere between a sparrow's housekeeping and Ayn Rand—that embodied a genre occasionally known as "twig art." In her new work, however, the brindles and brambles and general twigginess have given way to a group of overwhelmingly black and filipendulous constructions that evoke Brobdingnagian hornets' nests, or a coal miner's nightmare chandeliers.

The six spectacular sculptures in the gallery—mostly of wire mesh and steel, covered with black sand—hang from the ceiling on vinelike "stems" and are thoroughly in the round: visually alive and foreboding from every angle. Metallic tendrils may suggest the pubic tangles of the infernally wispy work of Alan Saret, yet Coyne's very intense pieces also function graphically, and might be included in the draftsman's contract that covers such artists as Terry Winters and Carroll Dunham. This work, in short, is full of rich implications—great, awful, but never indifferent—and, what's more, it gives "organic" goods a bad name.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—A show of eighty Chinese paintings of the Ming and Qing dynasties, selected from the vast holdings at the Palace Museum in the Forbidden City, in Beijing. Through Oct. 29. . . . ¶ "Italian Majolica," an exhibition that offers a neatly telescoped history of late-Quattrocento and Cinquecento art, and includes a variety of extraordinary objects. Through Oct. 1. . . . ¶ "Invention and Continuity in Contemporary Photographs." Through Oct. 8. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Tuesday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—An installation by Matt Mullican of computer-based works, including multimedia plans for a non-utopian model city. It's a handsome exhibition, with, unfortunately, a metaconcept that seems half empty and not a little coy. Through Oct. 24. . . . ¶ Photographs by Aaron Siskind from the permanent collection. Through Oct. 10. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—The museum will be closed until Sept. 28.

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—A current show of works acquired over the past fifteen years provides a fascinating example of institutional collecting. Through Oct. 15. . . . ¶ A show of oils, watercolors, prints, and drawings by Edward Hopper. The hundred and fifty works span the artist's career, and are drawn from the museum's collection. Through Nov. 5. (Open Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

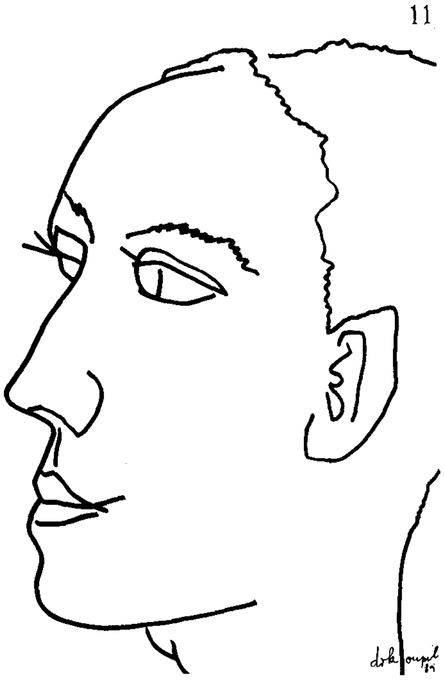
Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—An exhibition of thirty Mughal paintings (miniatures, mostly, in opaque watercolors and ink on paper) tracing changes in the style from the late fifteenth century to the eighteenth. Through Nov. 6. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 10 to 5.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—Nineteenth-century jewelry from the museum's collection. A well-presented, spiffy show that is organized in neat categories appropriate to the categorical imperatives of the Victorian period: materials and techniques peculiar to the age, such as tortoiseshell and human hair, filigree and *pietra dura;* preoccupations, such as flowers and other natural specimens; revivalism, especially of styles of the then newly excavated ancient world; and jeweller stars of the day, in particular Giuliano (who worked in London) and the influential Castellani (of Rome and Naples), both of whom popularized neo-Etruscan and neoclassical designs. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge from 5 to 9; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Grolier Club, 47 E. 60th St.—A show of more than a hundred and fifty books, manuscripts, and drawings selected from Philip Hofer's 1984 bequest to Harvard University's Houghton Library. Included are books illustrated by Picasso and Matisse, and a hand-colored copy of Albrecht Dürer's "Apocalypse" (1498). Through Nov. 26. (Open Mondays through Saturdays, 10 to 5.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—"Gardens and Ghettos," an exhibition of more than three hundred works made by or for Italian Jews. The show is divided into four periods: architectural fragments and antiquities from the Roman Empire, the Era of the City States (1300-1550), and the Era of the Ghettos (1550-1870) occupy the first floor, while paintings and sculptures from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the post-Risorgimento period, are on the second floor. . . . ¶ "Exodus and Exile: 2,000 Years in Ancient Israel," an archeological exhibition tracing some of the cultural shifts and political cataclysms between 1200 B.C.E. and 600 C.E. that, bit by bit, transformed the Israelite kingdom into an international religious community—the birth, in short, of Jewish identity in the modern sense. A few objects, such as ancient mosaics and synagogue reliefs, have not been seen in this country before, and while they represent a fragmented and elusive story the show's attractive, playful installation is informative. (Open Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, noon to 5; Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—A modest show paying tribute to Jean Cocteau on his centenary that is comically, Waspily, un-Cocteau. This array of letters, sketches, "little magazines," and autographed scores, in dim hallway cases, over which one must lean to see the drawings—for instance, of Jean Marais, and of Raymond Radiguet, Cocteau's great love—hanging on the wall, tends to make viewers look like squinting lepidopterists. Perhaps better thus pinned, however, than not pinned at all. Through Nov. 5. . . . ¶ Piranesi's drawings of real and imagined Roman antiquities are half of a show of works by eighteenth-century artists who went to Rome in the period and found inspiration. Through Nov. 5. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)



Self-portrait by Jiří Georg Dokoupil

National Academy of Design, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—Seventy-five lithographs by George Bellows (1882-1925), an American realist painter whose prints documented boxing matches, bathers at riverfront beaches, and his family and friends. Through Oct. 29. (Open Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)

The New Museum, 583 Broadway—"Strange Attractors: Signs of Chaos": The aim of this eclectic group exhibition is to illustrate contemporary art's relationship to "chaos"; included are works by Carter Hodgkin that incorporate fractal geometry and microphotography; photographs of crumpled foil by James Welling; and a two-part site-specific installation by Ann Hamilton and Kathryn Clark. Through Nov. 26. (Open Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, noon to 8.)

New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—"City of Contrasts": In the twenties and thirties, Irving Browning was commissioned to photograph such landmarks as the Chrysler Building, the Waldorf-Astoria, and the Empire State Building. Many of those images are in this show, juxtaposed with post-Wall-Street-crash shots of apple venders, and of the numerous "Hoovervilles" that appeared as the Depression wore on. . . . ¶ A show celebrating the hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary of Louis Daguerre's invention of photography. Among the works selected from the society's collection are portraits of Washington Irving, Commodore Perry, and Tom Thumb. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.—This first retrospective of the well-regarded African-American painter Hughie Lee-Smith includes some moving and unusual portraits of isolation, made in the fifties, that call to mind Marsh, Tooker, and the early Guston, and sixties works depicting isolated figures next to metal poles with colored ribbons flapping from them. In the seventies and eighties, the subtle surrealist cast fades and a relatively ordinary urban realism remains. . . . ¶ Graphics and installations that incorporate photography, the work of fifteen contemporary artists. Both shows through Sept. 24. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

Graham Campbell / Mary Obering—Busy geometric paintings with compositions laid one over the other. / The artist uses lots of gold leaf on the surfaces of these paintings and sometimes silver on their edges—more glare than shine. Through Sept. 30. (CDS Gallery, 13 E. 75th St. Open Mondays.)

Elliott Green—This extremely agreeable first show of works by a young artist consists of many small, bright acrylic paintings, on somewhat familiar-seeming mythico-modern themes, that feature anthropomorphic faces along with boats, elephants, oceans, skies, planets, odd contraptions, and cavaliers. Through Sept. 23. (Hirschl & Adler Modern, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St.)

SHORT LIST—**ETHEL SCHWABACHER,** Schlesinger, 822 Madison Ave., at 69th St. (through Oct. 7); **DONALD SULTAN,** Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. (through Oct. 5).

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

PAUL LAFFOLEY—These paintings, by a Boston-based artist, look like exalted, cosmic-ideological Parcheesi boards. Looking at them, one feels as if one is doing time with an obsessive perpetual graduate student who has an axe to grind. Through Oct. 7. (Kent, 41 E. 57th St.)

ROBERT MANGOLD—A stunning selection of paintings from the sixties and seventies that reveals the artist's debt to Ellsworth Kelly, as well as Mangold's great skill at making the seemingly rational look princely. Through Oct. 7. (Lelong, 20 W. 57th St.)

SHORT LIST—**SUE COE,** Galerie St. Etienne, 24 W. 57th St. (through Nov. 4); **JIRI GEORG DOKOUPIL,** Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. (through Oct. 21); **SAM FRANCIS,** Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. (through Sept. 30); **RAYMOND HAN,** Schoelkopf, 50 W. 57th St. (through Oct. 11); **JOE JONES,** Kennedy, 40 W. 57th St. (through Sept. 30); **ROBERT JORDAN,** French, 41 W. 57th St. (open Mondays, through Sept. 30); **STEPHANIE KIRSCHEN-COLE,** De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St. (through Sept. 26); **RICHARD SERRA,** Pace, 32 E. 57th St. (through Oct. 14); **JACQUES VILLEGLÉ,** Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (open Mondays, through Oct. 17); **PHILIP WOFFORD,** Frumkin-Adams, 50 W. 57th St. (through Oct. 14).

GALLERIES—SoHo

KATHE BURKHART—A very funny exhibition of luridly vulgar paintings, in *True Confessions*-style, that form a comprehensive public iconology—including the "Ash Wednesday" face-lift and the trysts with Burton—of ol' Violet Eyes herself. In calling the show "Kathe Burkhart by Elizabeth Taylor," the artist efficiently drives home her plausible post-feminist, postmodern, as well as post-structuralist, point. . . . ¶ In the back room, a mini group show, titled "Buttinsky," pitches Tom of Finland against Adrian Piper and Nancy Shaver, among others; it is a zesty volley of pornographic and polemical statements and interventions. Through Sept. 30. (Feature, 484 Broome St.)

STEPHEN ELLIS—Monochrome fields with streaked, inky lines. The new works are a bit thin, but a creamy yellow painting is refreshingly airy. Through Sept. 30. (Koury Wingate, 578 Broadway.)

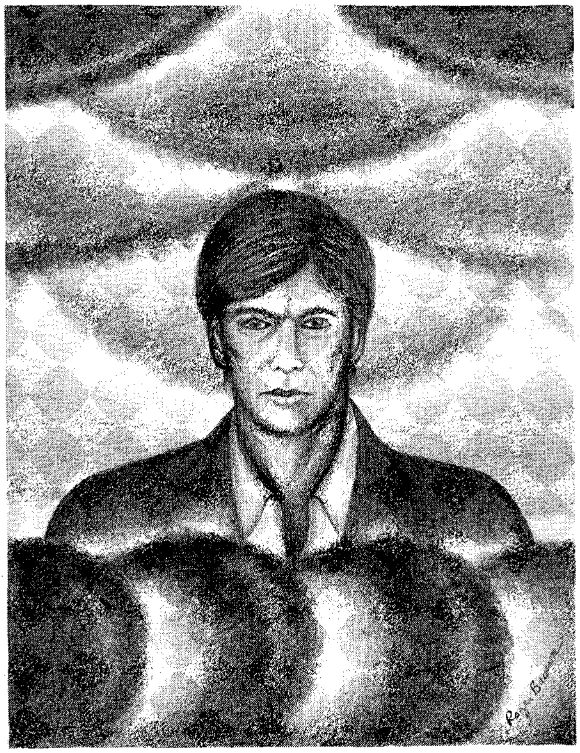
DUNCAN HANNAH—New paintings by this sweetly pained pasticheur. The big ones want to take you back to the summer of '42, with a little help from Hopper, Wyeth, André Derain, and Balthus. The small ones ride the well-trod Albert Pinkham Ryder trail, but their formats, subjects, and flat-surfaced frames seem direct ripoffs of Albert York. Through Sept. 30. (Charles Cowles, 420 West Broadway.)

JEFFREY JENKINS—Nasty, extravagantly framed taxidermic abstractions, some made primarily of pelts that have been cropped in such a way as to emphasize anatomical orifices, crevices, and other fetish zones. Here and there other materials suggest little puns on artists such as Kiefer, Kounellis, and Ryman. . . . ¶ In the rear gallery, a boisterous installation by Candy Ass (a.k.a. Cary Leibowitz) made up of comically artless valentines to artists, some good dirty jokes in cartoon form, and assorted paeans to homoeroticism, including lots of varsity pennants that read "Homo State" and "Go Fags!" Through Sept. 30. (Stux, 155 Spring St.)

JUDY LEDGERWOOD—Another show of pseudo-sublime paintings of dead, romantic landscapes that are derived from art history and television. Through Sept. 30. (Hanson, 415 West Broadway.)

SHERRIE LEVINE—Theme: Duchamp's "Bachelors, Even." Movement: pristine-looking, hand-size frosted-glass *objets*, based on the cryptic shapes of his "Large Glass" suitors, in pretty cherry-wood cases, spotlit. Variation: Levine's already familiar paintings resembling chessboards—Duchamp's game—in the rear gallery. This show is the polished, fashionable realization of a shrewd, tight idea. Through Oct. 14. (Boone, 417 West Broadway.)

ALDO ROSSI—Rossi's studies of buildings that he has designed with a stripped-down classical vocabulary, and, of his melancholy, still piazzas, evoke his fellow-Italians Morandi and de Chirico and exemplify the best of contemporary architectural drawing. Through Oct. 21. (Protetch, 560 Broadway.)



Self-portrait by Roger Brown

ULRICH RÜCKRIEM—An artist whose monuments of stone are almost always handsome and dispassionate. This installation of square and cubic floor pieces cut from beautiful greenish dolomite is no exception. Through Sept. 30. (Alexander, 59 Wooster St.)

FRANK SCHRODER—Large, blunt constructions of found-wood planks and hopsacking. The works recall Gordon Matta-Clark's slices of urban abandonment, but without that artist's pathos. Through Oct. 7. (Gibson, 568 Broadway.)

HANNAH WILKE—Titled "About Face," this trenchant and—as is always the case with this often brilliant and quite relentless artist—very personal exhibition of works in mixed mediums (watercolors, drawings, and photographs) establishes some stunning parallels between natural beauty and the ravages of old age and illness, and between states of innocence and the ever-present possibilities of sexual corruption. Key subjects include Wilke's pet lovebirds, her dying mother, and Wilke herself. Through Oct. 7. (Feldman, 31 Mercer St.)

KES ZAPKUS / MARCO GASTINI—Bravura paintings of a jazzy construction with jagged grids and candy colors. / Hyperconscious primitivism in the form of paintings on curled, skinlike parchment with bits of worn wood and broken glass. Through Sept. 30. (Weber, 142 Greene St.)

GROUP SHOWS—At **AMERICAN FINE ARTS,** 40 Wooster St.: Stuccoed dark-brown paintings by John Miller that give form to Freud's contention that the artist reënacts the child's urge to smear his excrement on the wall; some awful large dolls by Gary Mirabelle, including a sweatshirted, balding pig; and a wordwork by Lawrence Weiner that is a meditation on art and ideas. Through Sept. 30. . . . **GOOD,** 532 Broadway: A handsome and upbeat selection of non-representational paintings which includes David Reed's elegant, velvety swirls in the form of a predella panel and Chris Martin's bouncy numbered newspaper sheets in fall-foliage red, Kelly green, and lime. Through Sept. 30. . . . **PROTETCH,** 560 Broadway: Included among the several pre-season teasers here are a plastic pool of water by James O. Clark, with an illuminated black disk floating in it, that is enigmatic and oddly reassuring, and a huge new construction by Judy Pfaff—of transparent colored globes, large white steel dots, some French-curve paisleys, and lots of lacy connecting loops—that manages to be both massive and buoyant. Through Oct. 7.

SHORT LIST—**ROGER BROWN,** Kind, 136 Greene St. (through Oct. 11); **STAN BRODSKY,** Kelly, 591 Broadway (through Sept. 30); **MAX COYER,** Katzen-Brown, 475 Broome St. (through Oct. 14), and Schreiber, 171 Spring St. (through Oct. 4); **PETAH COYNE,** Shainman, 560 Broadway (through Oct. 7); **DAVID IRELAND,** Germans van Eck, 420 West Broadway (through Oct. 7); **RONALD JONES,** Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St. (through Oct. 7); **RONA PONDICK,** Fiction-Nonfiction, 21 Mercer St. (through Oct. 28); **SCOTT RICHTER,** Marcus, 578 Broadway (through Oct. 14); **CAROL SZYMANSKI,** Loughelton, 67 Prince St. (through Oct. 14).

OTHER GALLERIES

BEN KINMONT—This latest dose of nouveau-materialist realism consists of picturesque paintings of smeared shellac, oil, and encaustic, and a Sheetrock construction of a huge, half-enterable box. Through Sept. 30. (Cugliani, 508 Greenwich St., at Spring St.)

MAURA SHEEHAN—Sheehan is practically the only artist to keep installation art alive in the object-obsessed New York gallery scene. Her current environment is a rumination on religion and violence in America called "Drinking, Homicide & Rebellion." The show is spooky and affecting, and includes many black statues of Christian saints wearing sinister masks, and a row of books burned beyond identification. Through Oct. 14. (Watson, 241 Lafayette St.)

ANDY WARHOL (1930-87)—An exhibition of twenty-seven silk-screen variations of the 1964 flower composition. Through Oct. 14. (Baghoomian, 611 Broadway.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

THE other day, we decided to take a look at a pile of new books that we'd been telling ourselves we'd get to but that by then had become a wobbly tower on the floor. Within minutes, a theme emerged on the basis of their jackets: to quote Jacqueline Susann, an author who knew about the art of selling books if not the craft of writing them, what we found was "nudies, nudies, nudies." On the very top of the pile was "Bruce Weber," the book with the prettiest jacket. Unlike the inside photographs, which are mostly of people (many in the nude), this volume's faint-blue wraparound cover shows four different photographs of a neoclassical sculpture by Cecil Howard, titled "American Youth" (1942). The jacket of the second book, a novel called "The Men Who Loved Evelyn Cotton," by Frank Ronan, is also tinted blue. Its photograph, by Angela Coombes, depicts a naked couple standing in the

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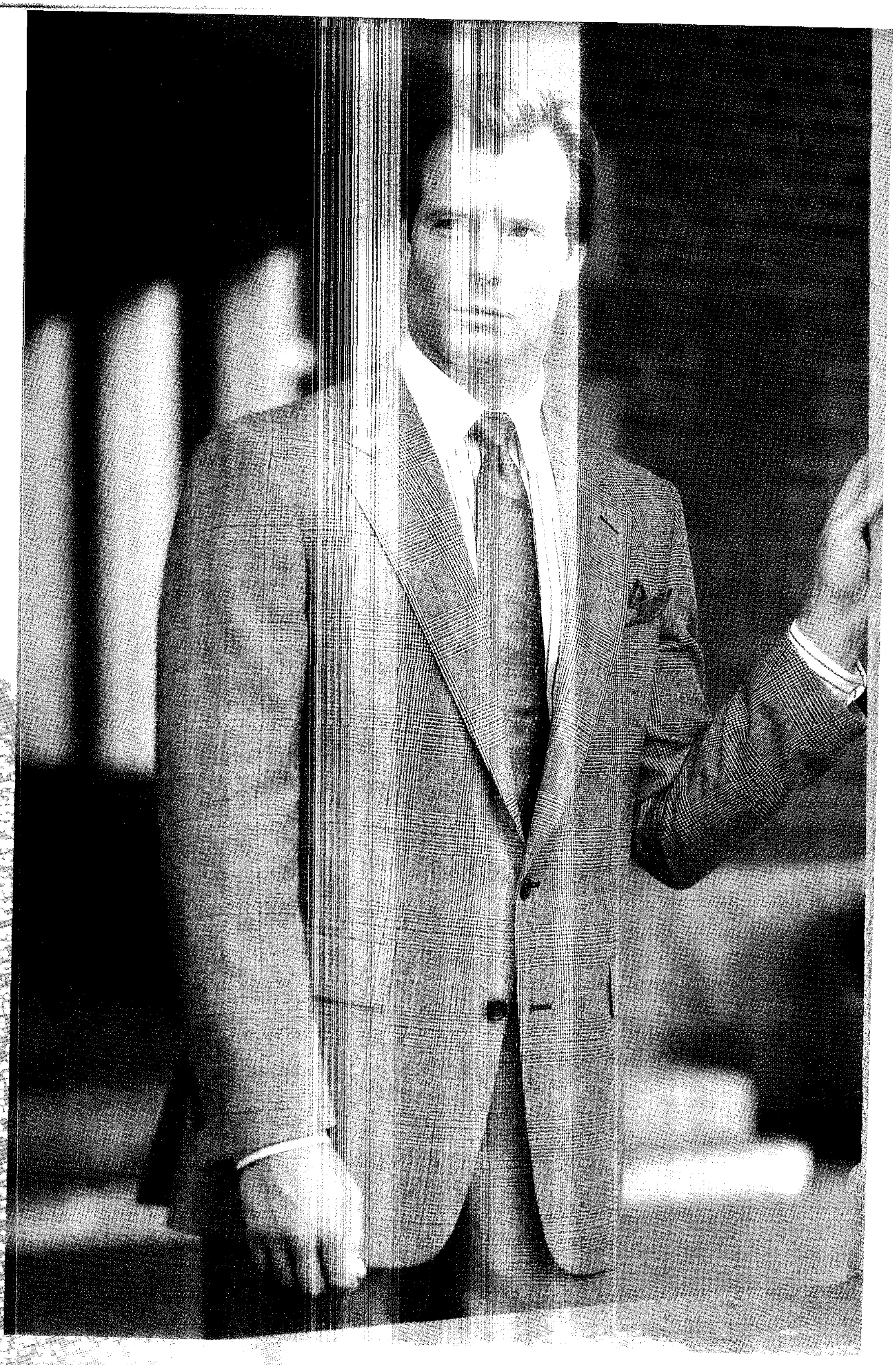

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arch of a mature hedge, engaged in the kind of frolics that are the stuff of blue movies. The woman seems utterly bored, and the two of them are bookended by two pieces of nosy-looking female statuary. The third book, "The Nude: A New Perspective," by Gill Saunders, has a nude by Edvard Munch on the cover, a nude by Brassaï on the frontispiece, and a nude by Robert Mapplethorpe on the back. Phyllis Rose's biography of Josephine Baker came next. The cover photograph of Baker, by Hoyningen-Huené, taken in 1930, is not literally a nude—Baker's holding a scarf and ropes of pearls—but this arrangement is just a tease of modesty, a pseudo coverup. You know that the minute she lowers her arm, there she'll be.

We were starting to wonder if this recurring motif was the result of pure chance, or of commercialism, or if a spirit of libertinism had overtaken the field of book-jacket design, when we came across "The Rub of the Green," by William Hallberg. This book didn't answer our question, but it suggested that there's a rub to one of our most beloved clichés. On the front of the novel's paperback edition is a picture of a golf course that has the contours of a naked woman, a kind of erotic Green Giantess. The plot is about a man who loves golf, his mother, and someone else's girlfriend, and who ends up in prison—par for the course of the modern novel. This was the fifth book in a row whose contents corresponded to what was suggested on the outside. Who says you can't judge books by their covers?

Duane Michals—Illustration, drawing, painting, photography, poetry, and prose have been brought together in this show with such lightness and apparent ease that you never feel the weight of the artist's ambitious and greedy desire to use so many art forms. Through Sept. 30. (Janis, 110 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Walter Rosenblum—A small exhibition of photographs drawn from such documentary series as the Pitt Street Project, in the late thirties, and a 1958 journey through Haiti. Through Oct. 14. (Photofind, 138 Spring St.)

Aaron Siskind—No one can defend the importance of form in photography better than John Szarkowski, and few photographers can illustrate Szarkowski's words as well as Aaron Siskind. Szarkowski's selection of Siskind's prints from those owned by the Museum of Modern Art is a treat. Even though many of Siskind's photographs on view here could mingle among a very refined gathering of abstract paintings, they don't betray their roots, and never let you forget where they came from—a camera that framed what was already there. Through Oct. 10. (Museum of Modern Art.)

International Center of Photography—"Portraits of Black Women Who Changed America," a show of works by photojournalist Brian Lanker. . . . ¶ Dorit Cypis has assembled an installation, called "The Naked Nude," in which viewers are surrounded by seven slide projectors. Both shows through Oct. 29. (1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

International Center of Photography Midtown—Three exhibitions of works by individual artists, plus two of works from the I.C.P.'s permanent collection, fill this new space, which has two floors and twelve thousand square feet. Alexander Liberman has photographic portraits of artists (among them Braque, Picasso, and Rouault) in their studios. . . . ¶ Barbara Kasten has Cibachrome prints of architecture. . . . ¶ Photojournalist James Nachtweys, whose assignments have taken him to Nicaragua, the West Bank, Sri Lanka, and other areas of conflict, is showing more than fifty color photographs. Through Nov. 1. (Sixth Ave. at 43rd St. Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 8.)

"Invention and Continuity in Contemporary Photographs"—*The title of this show promises* more than what you actually get. What's on display is a small selection of work, some of it strong and some as unsubtle as the curatorial method that has systematized the images into three obvious categories. Through Oct. 8. (Metropolitan Museum.)

Short List—**LEWIS BALTZ,** Lorence-Monk, 568 Broadway, and Castelli, 578 Broadway (through Oct. 14); **STEPHEN BRIGIDI,** Witkin, 415 West Broadway (through Oct. 21); **POL BURY,** Prakapas, 19 E. 71st St. (opens at noon, through Oct. 28); **KATHY GROVE** and **CARL TOTH,** Pace-MacGill, 11 E. 57th St. (through Oct. 14); **ANDREAS GURSKY,** 303 Gallery, 127 Spring St. (through Oct. 14); **ANDRÉ KERTÉSZ,** Twining, 568 Broadway (through Oct. 14); **JASCHI KLEIN,** Pfeifer, 568 Broadway (through Oct. 12); **WARREN NEIDICH,** Burden, 20 E. 23rd St. (opens at noon, through Sept. 22); **MITCHELL SYROP,** Lieberman & Saul, 155 Spring St. (through Oct. 7); **JEFF WALL,** Marian Goodman Gallery, 24 W. 57th St. (open Mondays, through Oct. 7).

MUSIC

WE always enjoy a chance to hear the clean, lucid lines of Haydn rendered on old instruments: there is a better chance (though never a guarantee) that the musical discourse will be transparent and readily intelligible in all its parts. Sponsored by Music Before 1800, the Classical Quartet and the Mozartean Players, two local early-instrument groups, will join forces this Sunday afternoon, September 24, for a Haydn-Mozart program in the bright, resonant sanctuary of Corpus Christi Church.

In the meantime, we have looked over the schedule for the Metropolitan Opera's opening week (starting on the 25th) and we note that the conducting roster—an area in which the house has borne some pointed criticism—is very strong; indeed, it's all but unassailable. Opening night will feature "Aida," with Aprile Millo in the title role, conducted by James Levine. Tuesday brings the return of Teresa Stratas to the Met stage, playing all three heroines in Puccini's "Il Trittico," conducted by James Levine. On Wednesday comes Gershwin's "Porgy and Bess," conducted by James Levine. Thursday is another "Aida" and Friday another "Trittico," both conducted by Mr. Levine.

The Metropolitan's artistic director permits himself to rest one day short of the seventh (Saturday's conductors are Donato Renzetti and Robert Duerr), but a wag might suspect that he is even now wondering why he should.

Metropolitan Opera—James Levine conducting the opening performances of the season, which will run through May 6. **AIDA,** with Aprile Millo, Dolora Zajick, Placido Domingo, and Sherrill Milnes. (Sept. 25 at 7; a benefit.) . . . **IL TRITTICO,** consisting of three short operas—"Il Tabarro," with Teresa Stratas, Mignon Dunn, Giorgio Merighi, and Juan Pons; "Suor Angelica," with Teresa Stratas, Florence Quivar, Joyce Guyer, and Ariel Bybee; and "Gianni Schicchi," with Teresa Stratas, Mignon Dunn, Bruno Pola, and Vinson Cole. (Sept. 26 at 8.) . . . **PORGY AND BESS,** with Priscilla Baskerville, Marvis Martin, Camellia Johnson, Michael Smartt, and Ben Holt. (Sept. 27 at 8.) (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000.)

New York City Opera—The opera's orchestra

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Viewing begins: September 29

Impressionist and Modern Art
Auction: October 5
Viewing begins: September 29

Old Master Paintings
Auction: October 12
Viewing begins: October 7

Stamps
Auction: October 12 & 13
Viewing begins: October 9

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Auction: October 14
Viewing begins: October 7

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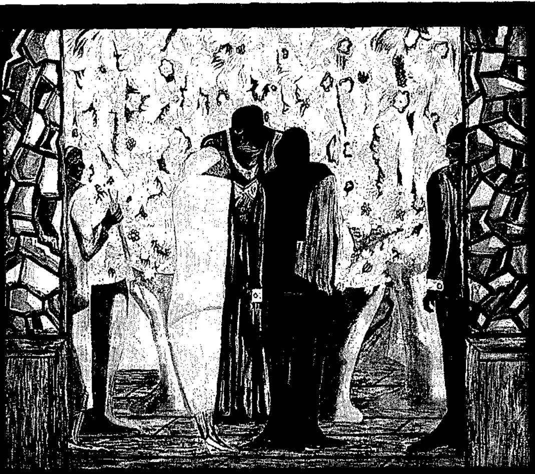
Hendrik Meyer, the Younger,
Peasants Picking Grapes and Conversing Outside a Cottage,
oil on canvas, 18 x 25 in. (45.7 x 63.5 cm.)
Estimate: $12,000–18,000

Old Master Paintings

Thursday, October 12 at 10 a.m.
Viewing: October 7-11



Jacob Lawrence, *The Wedding,*
signed *Jacob Lawrence* and dated *48,* l.r.,
tempera on gessoed board, 20 x 24 in. (51 x 61 cm.)
Estimate: $25,000–45,000

American Watercolors, Drawings, Paintings and Sculpture of the 19th and 20th Centuries

Thursday, September 28 at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.
Viewing: September 23–27

Bernard Buffet, *Vase de fleurs,* signed and
dated right center *Bernard Buffet 65,*
oil on canvas, 32 x 25¾ in.
(81.2 x 65.4 cm.)
Estimate: $70,000–90,000

Impressionist and Modern Paintings, Drawings and Sculpture

Thursday, October 5 at 2 p.m.
Viewing: September 29–October 4

Barbara Kruger, Untitled *(Free Love),* photograph mounted on
board in frame, 51⅜ x 87¾ in.
(130.5 x 222.8 cm.)
Estimate: $20,000–30,000

Contemporary Paintings, Drawings, Sculpture and Glass

Wednesday, October 4 at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.
Viewing: September 29–October 3

Fall Highlights

Auctions to be held in our galleries at 502 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10022. For viewing and sale information on other Christie's sales this month, call Auctionline (212/371-5438). Color-illustrated catalogues are available from Christie's Publications (718/784-1480).

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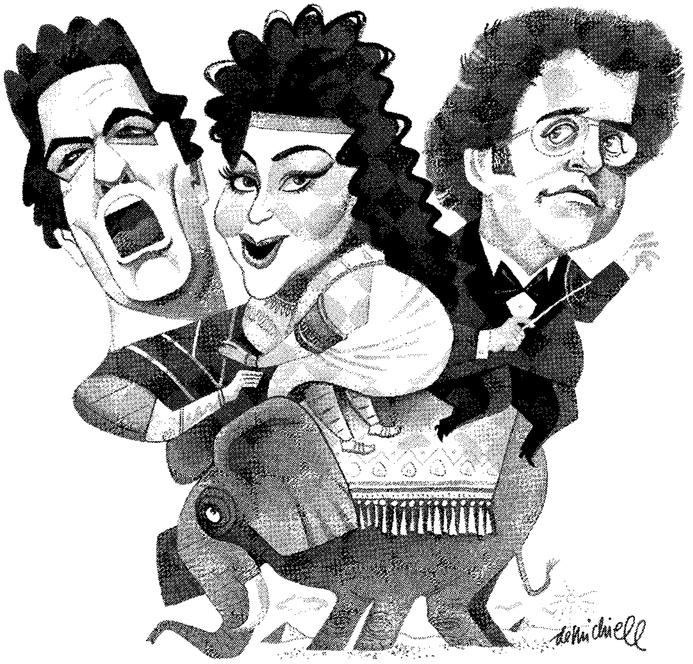


"Aida," with Placido Domingo, Aprile Millo, and James Levine

is on strike. The following are the performances that had been scheduled to take place. **LA TRAVIATA** (Sept. 19 at 8.) . . . **IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA** (Sept. 21 at 8.) . . . **RIGOLETTO** (Sept. 22 and Sept. 27 at 8.) . . . **DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE** (Sept. 23 at 2.) . . . **MADAME BUTTERFLY** (Sept. 23 and Sept. 26 at 8.) . . . **THE MIKADO** (Sept. 24 at 1.) . . . **DIE TOTE STADT** (Sept. 24 at 7.) (New York State Theatre. For updated information about performances and the exchange or refund of tickets, call 870-5570.)

New York Philharmonic—Zubin Mehta conducting the opening concerts of the season. Sept. 20 at 8: A benefit performance of works by Wagner, Mahler, and Mozart. With Jessye Norman, soprano. . . . ¶ Sept. 22 at 2 and Sept. 23 at 8: A Mozart-Mahler program. . . . ¶ Sept. 26 at 7:30: A Beethoven-Mahler program, with Murray Perahia, piano. (Avery Fisher Hall. 874-2424.)

"Voices of Change"—The final performances in this festival of American protest songs. Sept. 20 at 8:30: Marni Nixon, soprano; Ursula Oppens and Steven Blier, piano; and the American Music Theatre Group. . . . ¶ Sept. 23 at 8:30: A folk-music showcase featuring the Washington Sisters, Bright Morning Star, and the Flirtations. . . . ¶ Sept. 24 at 7: The Workmen's Circle Chorus, Sons and Daughters, the I.L.G.W.U. Chorus, the North Jersey Philharmonic Glee Club, and Earl Robinson. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719.)

Atlantic Sinfonietta—In a program of chamber music, including "Concert â Cinq," a work by the Belgian composer Joseph Jongen. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Sept. 20 at 8. For information about tickets, call 935-2200.)

Pandit Pran Nath—An Indian vocalist and composer presenting a "Raga Cycle." With La Monte Young, instrumentalist, and Marian Zazeela, vocalist. (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. 662-2133. Sept. 20 at 8 and Sept. 22 at 9.)

Yo-Yo Ma—Cello, accompanied by Jeffrey Kahane, piano. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Sept. 21 at 8.)

Amato Opera—Presenting "Don Giovanni." (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. Sept. 22-23 at 7:30 and Sept. 24 at 2:30.)

Nikolai Petrov—A Soviet pianist, in a program that will include compositions by Bach, Ravel, and Weber. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Sept. 22 at 8.)

Music from China—An instrumental ensemble presenting a program entitled "Ancient Melodies." (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Sept. 23 at 8.)

New York Chamber Symphony—In a program of works by Beethoven, Mozart, and Bernstein. With Erie Mills, soprano; Richard Goode, piano; and others. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440. Sept. 23 at 8, and Sept. 24 at 3.)

Juliana Gondek—Soprano, in a program of Polish songs. With Peter Grunberg, piano. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719. Sept. 24 at 3.)

New York Trumpet Ensemble—Performing a program entitled "A Brief History of the Trumpet." With guest artists. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. Sept. 24 at 3. Tickets at the door on the afternoon of the concert.)

Music Before 1800—Presenting the Mozartean Players and the Classical Quartet in a program of works by Mozart and Haydn. (Corpus Christi Church, W. 121st St., just east of Broadway. 666-0675. Sept. 24 at 4.)

Shostakovich String Quartets—The first in a series of four performances by the Manhattan String Quartet. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Sept. 25 at 8, with a pre-concert lecture at 6:30.)

JAZZ / POP / ROCK / PERSONAL APPEARANCES

James Taylor—In a benefit acoustic performance for the Natural Resources Defense Council, Sweet Baby James will play the hits, misses, and cover tunes of his twenty-plus-year career. Taylor was one of the most important singer-songwriters of the seventies, but his influence has waned over the last decade, and his later albums have received little radio airplay. But, as these sold-out nights attest, his supporters have not left him behind, and for them he will deliver his mellow, elegiac songs with plenty of warmth. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. Sept. 20 at 7:30, and Sept. 21-24 at 8.)

R.E.M.—With Throwing Muses. (Meadowlands Arena. 1-201 935-3900. Sept. 19 at 7:30. . . . ¶ Nassau Coliseum. 1-516 587-9222. Sept. 20 at 8.)

Leslie Uggams—Criterion Center Cabaret, Broadway at 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8, Fridays and Saturdays at 8 and 10, and Sundays at 3. Through Oct. 1.

Debbie Gibson—Madison Square Garden. 536-8300. Sept. 21 at 8. . . . ¶ Meadowlands Arena. Sept. 22 at 7:30.

Joe Jackson—Jones Beach Theatre. 1-516 221-1000. Sept. 22 at 8.

"Music of the Spirits" Concert—David Byrne will host this evening of percussive music by Milton Cardona & Eya Aranla, and La Troupe Makandal, with Frisner Augustin. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Sept. 22 at 8.)

Harry Belafonte—Lehman College Concert Hall, the Bronx. 960-8833. Sept. 23 at 8.

Jeffrey Schanzer and Bernadette Speach—With Michael Colquhoun. (Roulette, 228 West Broadway. Sept. 23 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

SPORTS

HOME TEAMS

Yankees—Vs. the Milwaukee Brewers, Sept. 19-20 at 7:30.

Mets—Vs. the Montreal Expos, Sept. 22 at 7:35, and Sept. 23-24 at 1:35. . . . ¶ Vs. the Philadelphia Phillies, Sept. 25-27 at 7:35.

Giants—Vs. the Phoenix Cardinals (formerly of St. Louis), Sept. 24 at 1.

(Home base for the Mets is Shea Stadium, 1-718 507-8499; for the Yankees, Yankee Stadium, 293-6000; for the Giants, Giants Stadium, the Meadowlands, 1-201 935-8111.)

RACING

Horses—At Belmont: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1. The Man o'War is on Sept. 23, and the Ruffian Handicap is on Sept. 24. . . . At the Meadowlands: Weeknights at 7:30. The Pegasus Handicap is on Sept. 22. . . . **TROTTING** at Yonkers Raceway: Weeknights at 8 and Tuesdays at 1.

Mercedes Mile—The women's masters starts at 12:08 on Sept. 23 in front of the Metropolitan Museum and finishes twenty blocks south, at 62nd St. Other races (high-school women, high-school men, men's masters) follow, and will be capped by the women's élite mile, which starts at 2:08, and the men's élite mile, which starts at 2:20.

Schooners, Ketches, Yawls, and Sloops—Racing in New York Harbor for the Mayor's Cup, Sept. 23 at 11. The race starts and finishes at Battery Park.

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Bonsai Bonanza—More than eighty bonsai trees—junipers, maples, azaleas, banyans—will be on display in the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory at the New York Botanical Garden; none are higher than an upended yardstick. Some of the plants grow in small containers, others grow on rocks that look like tiny mountains. Members of the Yama-ki Bonsai Society will be present to answer the question "How do they get so small?," and bonsai plants and accessories (containers, shears, wire) will be on sale at the gift shop. (Sept. 20-24, from 10 to 5.)

Lectures at the Library—Sept. 20: Elizabeth Fox-Genovese talks about white Southern women and religion. . . . ¶ Sept. 25: Frederick O'Neal, the actor, is interviewed by Ossie Davis. . . . ¶ Sept. 27: Nancy F. Cott talks about American women's history. (Celeste Bartos Forum, New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. For information about tickets, call 930-0855.)

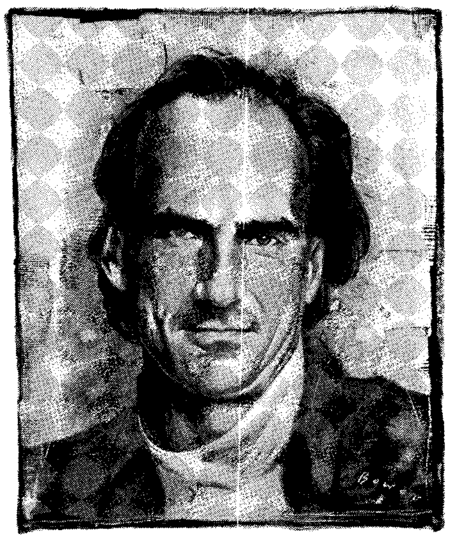
Aprile Millo—Talking about her life as a soprano. (Bruno Walter Auditorium, New York Public Library at Lincoln Center, 111 Amsterdam Ave., at 65th St. Sept. 21 at 6. Tickets at the door on the night of the lecture.)

International Antique Dealers Show—The British collectors Brian and Anna Haughton have organized this as an "international" show, even though, in this first year, exhibitors come mainly from the United States and Britain. Highlights will be art and artifacts from ancient China: a collection of snuff bottles, gilt weapons, and several bronze vessels from the Warring States/Han period. (7th Regiment Armory, Park Ave. at 66th St. Sept. 23-27, from 11 to 8.)

Drama and Pros Readings at the Y—Sept. 24: David Hare and Michael Weller. . . . ¶ Sept. 25: William Maxwell and Mavis Gallant. (Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440. Evenings at 8.)

Funny Accountants—With April 15 still seven months away, the nation's accountants are loosening their ties, stowing their calculators, and generally letting it all hang out. At 7:30, on Sept. 27, at the Comic Strip (Second Ave. at 81st St.), ten C.P.A.s will compete for the title of "funniest" by performing original standup material. "Funny" topics may include the I.R.S., spreadsheets, and taxes.

Memorandum—The first day of fall is Sept. 23.



James Taylor at the Beacon

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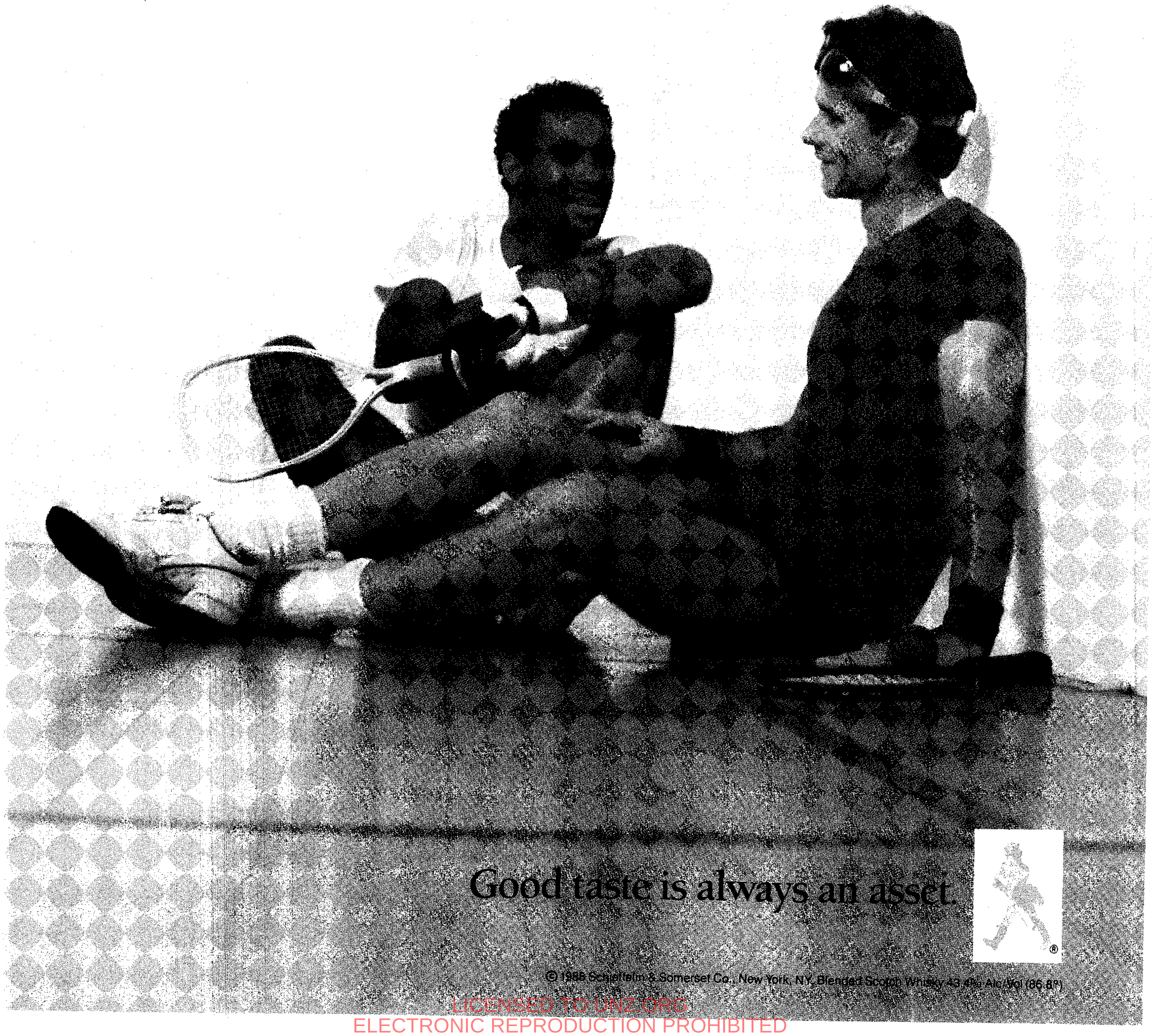
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	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27			

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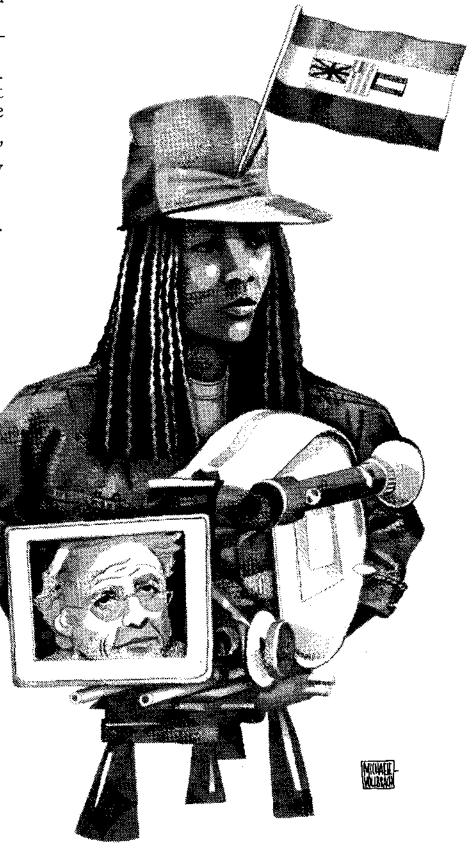


Euzhan Palcy directs Marlon Brando in "A Dry White Season"

EAST SIDE

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)
Through Sept. 21: "Walpurgis Night" (1935, directed by Gustof Edgren; in Swedish), with Ingrid Bergman, Lars Hanson, and Victor Sjöström; and "A Woman's Face" (1938, Gustaf Molander; in Swedish), with Bergman and Georg Rydeberg.
Sept. 22-24: "Only One Night" (1939, Gustaf Molander; in Swedish), with Bergman and Edvin Adolphson; and "Intermezzo" (1936, Molander; in Swedish), with Bergman and Gosta Ekman.
From Sept. 26: "Swedenhielms" (1935, Molander; in Swedish), with Bergman and Ekman; and "Intermezzo."

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: Through Sept. 21: "Batman" (†). From Sept. 22: "Penn and Teller Get Killed" (Arthur Penn), with Penn Jillette and Teller.
Theatre 2: Through Sept. 21: "The Abyss" (†). From Sept. 22: "Black Rain" (Ridley Scott), with Michael Douglas.
Theatre 3: "Cookie" (†).

Bijou Cinema, 3rd Ave. between 13th and 14th. (505-7320)
"Sea of Love" (†).

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"Dead Poets Society" (†).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"Sea of Love" (†).

Murray Hill, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)
"Night Game" (Peter Masterson), with Roy Scheider and Karen Young.

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "sex, lies, and videotape" (†).
Theatre 2: "Shirley Valentine" (†).
Theatre 3: Through Sept. 21: "The Package" (Andrew Davis), with Gene Hackman, Joanna Cassidy, Tommy Lee Jones, and John Heard. From Sept. 22: "Black Rain" (Ridley Scott), with Michael Douglas.

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Parenthood" (†).

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"Kickboxer" (Mark DiSalle and David Worth), with Jean-Claude Van Damme.

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Through Sept. 21: "Lethal Weapon 2" (†).
From Sept. 22: "Penn and Teller Get Killed" (Arthur Penn), with Penn Jillette and Teller.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"The Abyss" (†).

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"sex, lies, and videotape" (†).

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "Uncle Buck" (John Hughes), with John Candy and Amy Madigan.
Theatre 2: "Casualties of War" (†).

59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"The Big Picture" (†).

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "Parenthood" (†).
Theatre 2: "Sea of Love" (†).

Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
Theatre 1: "In Country" (Norman Jewison), with Bruce Willis, Emily Lloyd, Joan Allen, Kevin Anderson, and Judith Ivey.
Theatre 2: Through Sept. 21: "Batman" (†). From Sept. 22: "Heavy Petting" (Obie Benz).
Theatre 3: "Spices" (Ketan Mehta; in Hindi), with Smita Patil.

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "The Heart of Dixie" (Martin Davidson), with Ally Sheedy, Virginia Madsen, Phoebe Cates, Treat Williams, and Don Michael Paul.
Theatre 2: "Night Game" (Peter Masterson), with Roy Scheider and Karen Young.

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"When Harry Met Sally . . ." (†).

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: Through Sept. 21: "The Package" (Andrew Davis), with Gene Hackman, Joanna Cassidy, Tommy Lee Jones, and John Heard. From Sept. 22: "Black Rain" (Ridley Scott), with Michael Douglas.
Theatre 2: Through Sept. 19: "Relentless" (William Lustig), with Judd Nelson, Robert Loggia, and Leo Rossi. From Sept. 20: "A Dry White Season" (Euzhan Palcy), with Donald Sutherland, Janet Suzman, Jurgen Prochnow, Zakes Mokae, Susan Sarandon, and Marlon Brando.

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
Through Sept. 19: "Dead Poets Society" (†).
From Sept. 20: "Queen of Hearts" (Jon Amiel), with Anita Zagaria, Joseph Long, Eileen Way, Vittorio Duse, and Vittorio Amandola.

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Shirley Valentine" (†).

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
Through Sept. 21: "Parenthood" (†).
From Sept. 22: "Black Rain" (Ridley Scott), with Michael Douglas.

Loews Orpheum I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
Theatre 1: "Night Game" (Peter Masterson), with Roy Scheider and Karen Young.
Theatre 2: "Sea of Love" (†).

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: "Kickboxer" (Mark DiSalle and David Worth), with Jean-Claude Van Damme.
Theatre 2: "Uncle Buck" (John Hughes), with John Candy and Amy Madigan.

WEST SIDE

Bleecker Street Cinema I and 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
Theatre 1: "Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown" (†).
Theatre 2: "Chocolat" (†).

Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "When Harry Met Sally . . ." (†).
Theatre 2: "sex, lies, and videotape" (†).

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515)
"Night Game" (directed by Peter Masterson), with Roy Scheider and Karen Young.

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Parenthood" (†).
Theatre 2: "Sea of Love" (†).

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "The Second Animation Celebration: The Movie," twenty-four short films from six countries.
Theatre 2: "Spices" (Ketan Mehta; in Hindi), with Smita Patil.
Theatre 3: "The Heart of Dixie" (Martin Davidson), with Ally Sheedy, Virginia Madsen, Phoebe Cates, Treat Williams, and Don Michael Paul.
Theatre 4: "Distant Voices, Still Lives" (†).

Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)
Theatre 1: "Cookie" (†).
Theatre 2: "Lethal Weapon 2" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Abyss" (†).
Theatre 4: "Parenthood" (†).
Theatre 5: "When Harry Met Sally . . ." (†).
Theatre 6: "Sea of Love" (†).
Theatre 7: "Sea of Love" (†).
Theatre 8: "Casualties of War" (†).
Theatre 9: From Sept. 20 (tentative): "A Dry White Season" (Euzhan Palcy), with Donald Sutherland and Marlon Brando.

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0600)
Theatre 1: "Do the Right Thing" (†).
Theatre 2: "Kickboxer" (Mark DiSalle and David Worth), with Jean-Claude Van Damme.
Theatre 3: "Uncle Buck" (John Hughes), with John Candy and Amy Madigan.

Worldwide Cinemas, 49th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)
Theatre 1: "When Harry Met Sally . . ." (†).
Theatre 2: "Do the Right Thing" (†).
Theatre 3: "Parenthood" (†).
Theatre 4: "The Abyss" (†).
Theatre 5: "Casualties of War" (†).
Theatre 6: "Uncle Buck" (John Hughes), with John Candy and Amy Madigan.

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"Dead Poets Society" (†).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Sea of Love" (†).

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
"The Dybbuk" (1938, Michal Waszynski; in Yiddish).

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"The Heart of Dixie" (Martin Davidson), with Ally Sheedy, Virginia Madsen, Phoebe Cates, Treat Williams, and Don Michael Paul.

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
"Romero" (John Duigan), with Raul Julia.

Carnegie Screening Room, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (757-2131)
"Weapons of the Spirit" (Pierre Sauvage), a documentary.

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
"Tom Jones" (†).

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
(Matinées only) "The Adventures of Milo and Otis" (Masanori Hata); and (evenings only) "Do the Right Thing" (†).

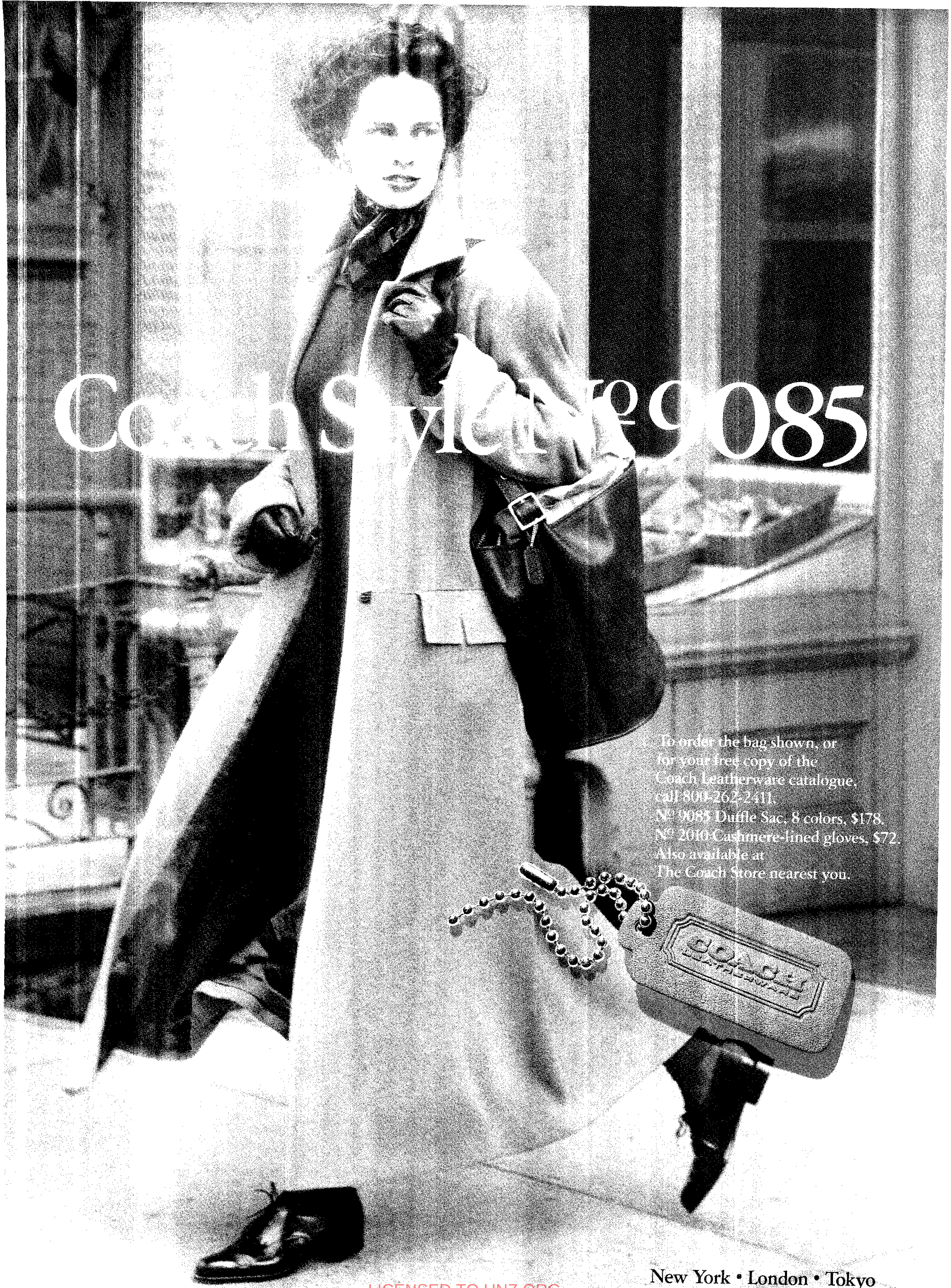
Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Shirley Valentine" (†).

Lincoln Plaza I, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "High Fidelity—The Adventures of the Guarneri String Quartet" (Allan Miller), a documentary.
Theatre 2: "The Little Thief" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Music Teacher" (Gérard Corbiau; in French).

Cinema Studio I and 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
Theatre 1: "sex, lies, and videotape" (†).
Theatre 2: "sex, lies, and videotape" (†).

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
"When Harry Met Sally . . ." (†).

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: Through Sept. 19: "Batman" (†).



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MOVIE HOUSES–Cont'd

From Sept. 20: "A Dry White Season" (Euzhan Palcy), with Donald Sutherland and Marlon Brando.

Theatre 2: Through Sept. 21: "Night Game" (Peter Masterson), with Roy Scheider and Karen Young. From Sept. 22: "Penn and Teller Get Killed" (Arthur Penn), with Penn Jillette and Teller.

Theatre 3: Through Sept. 21: "Relentless" (William Lustig), with Judd Nelson. From Sept. 22: "Black Rain" (Ridley Scott), with Michael Douglas.

Theatre 4: "The Package" (Andrew Davis), with Gene Hackman, Joanna Cassidy, Tommy Lee Jones, and John Heard.

Theatre 5: "Lethal Weapon 2" (†).

Theatre 6: "Cookie" (†).

Metro Cinema I and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)

Theatre 1: "Parenthood" (†).

Theatre 2: "Sea of Love" (†).

Columbia Cinema, B'way at 103rd. (316-6600)

"Uncle Buck" (John Hughes), with John Candy and Amy Madigan.

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)

Theatre 1: "Kickboxer" (Mark DiSalle and David Worth), with Jean-Claude Van Damme.

Theatre 2: "Casualties of War" (†).

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)

Theatre 1: "Batman" (†).

Theatre 2: "Night Game" (directed by Peter Masterson), with Roy Scheider and Karen Young.

Theatre 3: "Kickboxer" (Mark DiSalle and David Worth), with Jean-Claude Van Damme.

Theatre 4: "Heaven Becomes Hell."

Theatre 5: "Lock Up" (John Flynn), with Sylvester Stallone, Donald Sutherland, John Amos, Darlanne Fluegel, and Sonny Landham.

Theatre 6: "Nowhere to Run."

Embassy I, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)

"The Package" (Andrew Davis), with Gene Hackman, Joanna Cassidy, Tommy Lee Jones, and John Heard.

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)

Theatre 2: "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade" (†); and "Star Trek V: The Final Frontier" (William Shatner).

Theatre 3: "Turner & Hooch" (Roger Spottiswoode), with Tom Hanks; and "Honey, I Shrunk the Kids" (†).

Theatre 4: "The Heart of Dixie" (Martin Davidson), with Ally Sheedy, Virginia Madsen, Phoebe Cates, Treat Williams, and Don Michael Paul.

Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)

Through Sept. 21: "Relentless" (William Lustig), with Judd Nelson.

From Sept. 22: "Black Rain" (Ridley Scott), with Michael Douglas.

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)

Theatre 1: "Parenthood" (†).

Theatre 2: "Casualties of War" (†).

Warner, 7th Ave. between 42nd and 43rd. (764-6760)

"A Nightmare on Elm Street 5: The Dream Child" (Stephen Hopkins), with Robert Englund.

West Side Cinema I and 2, 7th Ave. at 48th. (398-1720)

Theatre 1: "Lethal Weapon 2" (†).

Theatre 2: "Lethal Weapon 2" (†).

REVIVAL HOUSES

Biograph Cinema, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)

Sept. 18: "The Navigator" (1924, directed by Buster Keaton and Donald Crisp; silent), "Grandma's Boy" (1922, Fred Newmeyer; silent), with Harold Lloyd, Mildred Davis, and Anna Townsend; and "The Three Ages" (1922, Keaton; silent), with Keaton, Wallace Beery, and Joe Roberts.

Sept. 19-20: "The Sunshine Boys" (1975, Herbert Ross), with Walter Matthau, George Burns, and Richard Benjamin; and "George Washington Slept Here" (1942, William Keighley), with Ann Sheridan.

Sept. 21: "Alibi Ike" (1935, Ray Enright), with Joe E. Brown; and "Whispering Ghosts" (1942, Alfred Werker), with Brenda Joyce and Milton Berle.

Sept. 22-23: "Easy to Wed" (1946, Edward Buzzell), with Van Johnson, Esther Williams, and Lucille Ball; and "Miss Grant Takes Richmond" (1950, Lloyd Bacon), with Ball and William Holden.

Sept. 24-25: "The Band Wagon" (1953, Vincente Minnelli), with Fred Astaire, Cyd Charisse, and Nanette Fabray; and "It's Always Fair Weather" (†).

"The Manchurian Candidate" (playing September 27-28 at the Thalia SoHo) is a cock-and-bull's-eye suspense film. This audacious, terrifying thriller (originally released in 1962) centers on a Korean War "hero" (Laurence Harvey) who's secretly brainwashed into becoming a Red assassin; the politically ambitious mother (Angela Lansbury) who exploits him; and the major (Frank Sinatra) who tries to cure him. The movie takes satiric jabs at McCarthyism, Communism, and mother love that are just as bloodcurdling as the realistic spills and fantastic chills.

The movie is out on videocassette, but to get its full explosive power you must see it on the big screen. By combining reassuring clichés (like a standard newsreel narrator), jolting action scenes, and surreal concepts—such as a young woman (Leslie Parrish) draped in a Queen of Diamonds costume—director John Frankenheimer creates a sphere of political buffoonery and violence that eclipses TV reality. He explores the manipulation of both minds and images. George Axelrod, who deftly adapted Richard Condon's novel, contributes dotty, unpredictable lines and situations. When Khigh Dhiegh quips his way through the role of a wry brainwasher, the movie turns into "Peking Duck Soup." When Sinatra and Henry Silva (as a sinister Korean servant) act out the first scary-funny karate scene, the film becomes "The Pinko Panther."

Sept. 26-27: "The Clock" (1945, Vincente Minnelli), with Judy Garland and Robert Walker; and "Weekend at the Waldorf" (1945, Robert Z. Leonard), with Ginger Rogers, Walter Pidgeon, Lana Turner, and Van Johnson.

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)

Through Sept. 19: "Paris, Texas" (1984, Wim Wenders), with Harry Dean Stanton, Nastassja Kinski, and Dean Stockwell; and "Hammett" (1983, Wenders), with Frederic Forrest.

Sept. 20-21: "Jacknife" (1989, David Jones), with Robert De Niro, Ed Harris, and Kathy Baker; and "The King of Comedy" (1983, Martin Scorsese), with De Niro and Jerry Lewis.

Sept. 22-23: "Rain Man" (1988, Barry Levinson), with Dustin Hoffman and Tom Cruise; and "Being There" (1979, Hal Ashby), with Peter Sellers, Shirley MacLaine, Melvyn Douglas, and Jack Warden.

Sept. 24: "Amarcord" (1974, Federico Fellini; in Italian), with Bruno Zanin; and "Il Bidone" (†).

Sept. 25-26: "Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid" (†); and "Once Upon a Time in the West" (1969, Sergio Leone), with Henry Fonda, Claudia Cardinale, and Jason Robards.

From Sept. 27: "Working Girl" (1988, Mike Nichols), with Harrison Ford, Sigourney Weaver, and Melanie Griffith; and "Nine to Five" (1980, Colin Higgins), with Jane Fonda, Lily Tomlin, Dolly Parton, and Dabney Coleman.

Thalia SoHo, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498)

Through Sept. 19: "Blood Money" (1933, Rowland Brown), with George Bancroft, Judith Anderson and Frances Dee; "Framed" (1947, Richard Wallace), with Glenn Ford; and "The Mob" (1951, Robert Parrish), with Broderick Crawford and Richard Kiley.

Sept. 20-21: "Bunny Lake Is Missing" (1965, Otto Preminger), with Laurence Olivier, Carol Lynley, and Keir Dullea; and "The Power and the Glory" (1960, Mark Daniels), with Olivier.

Sept. 22-23: "Dr. Strangelove" (1964, Stanley Kubrick), with Peter Sellers, George C. Scott, and Sterling Hayden; and "Repulsion" (†).

Sept. 24: "The Innocents" (1961, Jack Clayton), with Deborah Kerr and Michael Redgrave; and "The Whisperers" (1967, Bryan Forbes), with Edith Evans and Eric Portman.

Sept. 25-26: "Rogue Cop" (1954, Roy Rowland), with Robert Taylor, Janet Leigh, George Raft, and Anne Francis; "Impact" (1949, Arthur Lubin), with Brian Donlevy and Ella Raines; and "Scarlet Street" (1946, Fritz Lang), with Joan Bennett, Edward G. Robinson, and Dan Duryea.

From Sept. 27: "The Manchurian Candidate" (1962, John Frankenheimer), with Frank Sinatra, Laurence Harvey, Janet Leigh, Angela Lansbury, James Gregory, and Henry Silva; and "Seconds" (1966, Frankenheimer), with Rock Hudson, Salome Jens, and John Randolph.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

Sept. 18: "Testament of Orpheus" (1962, Jean Cocteau; in French); "The Blood of a Poet" (1930, Cocteau; in French); and "Orpheus" (1949, Cocteau; in French), with Jean Marais, Maria Casarès, and François Périer.

Sept. 19: "Cabin in the Sky" (1943, Vincente Minnelli), with Ethel Waters, Eddie Anderson, Lena Horne, Louis Armstrong, and Bubbles; and "Stormy Weather" (1943, Andrew Stone), with Bill Robinson, Fats Waller, Cab Calloway, and Dooley Wilson.

Sept. 20: "Only Angels Have Wings" (1939, Howard Hawks), with Jean Arthur, Cary Grant, Rita Hayworth, and Richard Barthelmess; and "The Talk of the Town" (1942, George Stevens), with Grant, Arthur, Ronald Colman, Glenda Farrell, and Rex Ingram.

Sept. 21: "After the Thin Man" (1936, W. S. Van Dyke), with Myrna Loy and William Powell; and "The Thin Man" (†).

Sept. 22-23: "Casablanca" (1942, Michael Curtiz), with Humphrey Bogart, Ingrid Bergman, and Claude Rains; and "The Maltese Falcon" (1941, John Huston), with Mary Astor, Bogart, Sydney Greenstreet, Elisha Cook, Jr., and Peter Lorre.

Sept. 24: "The Magic Flute" (1975, Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish); and "Smiles of a Summer Night" (†).

Sept. 25: "Le Jour se Lève" ("Daybreak"; 1939, Marcel Carné; in French), with Jean Gabin, Jules Berry, and Arletty; and "Bizarre, Bizarre" (1937, Carné; in French), with Louis Jouvet, Françoise Rosay, Jean-Louis Barrault, Michel Simon, and Jean-Pierre Aumont.

Sept. 26: "And Then There Were None" (†); and "Dead of Night" (1945), a five-part English film about the supernatural.

Sept. 27: "The Threepenny Opera" (1931, G. W. Pabst; in German), with Lotte Lenya; and "The Blue Angel" (1929, Josef von Sternberg; in German), with Marlene Dietrich, Emil Jannings, and Hans Albers.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490)—Sept. 18 at 12:30: A program of ninety 1988 award-winning British film and videotape advertisements. . . . ¶ Sept. 18 at 3 and 6: Two different programs of short animated Czech films by Karel Zeman. . . . ¶ Sept. 19 at 3 and 6: Six short films by the Brazilian filmmaker Artur Omar.

New York Film Festival—The first programs in an eighteen-day series of international films—At **alice tully hall:** Sept. 22 at 7:45: "Too Beautiful for You" (Bertrand Blier, France). . . . **avery fisher hall:** Sept. 22 at 9: "Too Beautiful for You." . . . **alice tully hall:** Sept. 23 at noon: "A Short Film About Killing" (Krzysztof Kieslowski, Poland). . . . ¶ Sept. 23 at 3: "The Plot Against Harry" (Michael Roemer, United States). . . . ¶ Sept. 23 at 6: "Strapless" (David Hare, Great Britain). . . . ¶ Sept. 23 at 9 and Sept. 24 at 2: "My Left Foot" (Jim Sheridan, Ireland). . . . ¶ Sept. 24 at 4:30: "Ariel" (Aki Kaurismaki, Finland). . . . ¶ Sept. 24 at 7: "A Short Film About Killing." . . . ¶ Sept. 24 at 9:30: "Strapless." . . . ¶ Sept. 25 at 6:15: "Ariel." . . . ¶ Sept. 25 at 9:30 and Sept. 26 at 6:15: "A Tale of the Wind" (Joris Ivens and Marceline Loridan,

MOVIE HOUSES—Cont'd

France). . . . ¶ Sept. 26 at 9 and Sept. 27 at 6:15: "Black Rain" (Shohei Imamura, Japan). . . . ¶ Sept. 27 at 9:30: "Roger and Me" (Michael Moore, United States). (For tickets, call 362-1911.)

Museum of Broadcasting, 1 E. 53rd St. (752-7684)—"MB Playhouse," a chance to see the television dramas you may have missed in the past thirty years. Sept. 19-23: James Thurber's "The Thirteen Clocks" (1953, ABC), with Cedric Hardwicke, Basil Rathbone, Roberta Peters, John Raitt, and Alice Peerce. . . . From Sept. 26: Bret Harte's "The Outcasts of Poker Flat" (1958, NBC), with George C. Scott, Ruth White, Janet Ward, and Larry Hagman; and Geina Berriault's "The Stone Boy" (1960), with Arthur Hill and Luke Halpin. Showings Tuesdays at 3 and 6 and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 3. . . . ¶ Comedies seen on cable. Sept. 19-23: "It's Garry Shandling's Show" (1988), two thirty-minute episodes. . . . From Sept. 26: "Robin Williams—An Evening at the Met" (1987). Showings Tuesdays at 12:15 and 5:30 and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 12:15. . . . ¶ Shows produced and directed by Gary Smith and Dwight Hemion. Sept. 19-23: "Ann-Margret Olsson" (1975, NBC), with Tina Turner and the Osmond Brothers; and "Shirley MacLaine at the Lido" (1979, CBS), with Tom Jones. . . . From Sept. 26: "Linda in Wonderland" (1980, CBS), with Linda Lavin, Lynn Redgrave, Anthony Newley, and Ron Leibman; and "Larry Gatlin and the Gatlin Brothers" (1981, ABC), with Johnny Cash, Dottie West, and Roger Miller. Showings Tuesdays through Saturdays at 1.

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St. Astoria. (1-718 784-0077)—In the **RIKLIS THEATRE,** "A Hand-Made World: Sixty Years of Animated Features." Sept. 20 at 2:30: "Pinocchio" (1940), from the Disney Studios. . . . Sept. 21 at 2:30: "Mr. Bug Goes to Town" (1941), from the Fleischer Studios. . . . Sept. 22 at 2:30: "The Three Caballeros" (1945), a group of animated shorts about Latin America, with Donald Duck as the tourist. . . . Sept. 23 at 1: "Gulliver's Travels" (1939), from the Fleischer Studios. . . . Sept. 23 at 3: "The Fabulous World of Jules Verne" (1956, Karel Zeman). . . . Sept. 23 at 5: "Tron" (1982, Steven Lisberger), with Jeff Bridges and Bruce Boxleitner. . . . Sept. 27 at 2:30: "Gulliver's Travels.". . . ¶ In the **RIKLIS THEATRE,** Sept. 24 at 1: "The Boy Friend" (1971, Ken Russell), with Twiggy and Christopher Gable, set designs by Tony Walton. . . . Sept. 24 at 4: Mr. Walton will discuss his career as a designer of sets and costumes in film and for the stage. . . . ¶ In the **WARNER COMMUNICATIONS SCREENING ROOM,** "The Rise and Fall of the Television Western," a survey of this genre, 1943-73, shown in eleven three-hour thematic programs ("Minorities and the Western," "The Classic Adult Western," and "The Warner Bros. Western" are a few of the groupings). Showings Wednesdays through Fridays at 1:30 and Saturdays and Sundays at 11:30 and 2:35.

Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St. (517-2742)—Films starring the late Indian actress Smita Patil. Sept. 23 at noon: "The Half-Truth" (1983, Govind Nihalani; in Hindi). . . . ¶ Sept. 23 at 4: "The Threshold" (1982, Jabbar Patel; in Marathi).

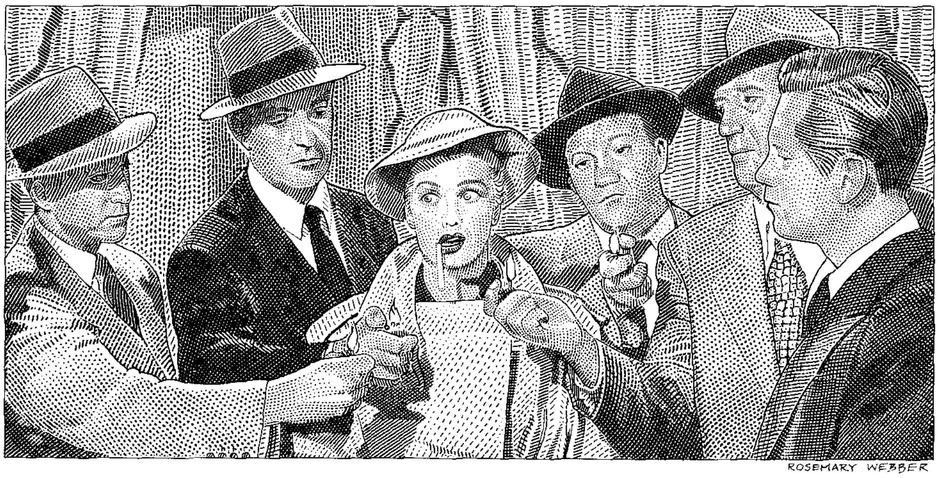
Anthology Film Archives, 32-34 Second Ave. at Second St. (477-2714)—Films showing in either the Jonas Mekas Theatre or the Maya Deren Theatre. Sept. 18-24 at 7 and 9: Fourteen different programs of the Third New York Lesbian and Gay Experimental Film Festival. . . . ¶ Sept. 27 at 8: Five short films by Jordan Belson, three short films by Bruce Baillie, and two short films by Douglass Crockwell. . . . ¶ Sept. 27 at 9:30: "Monte Carlo" (1930, Ernst Lubitsch), with Jeanette MacDonald, Jack Buchanan, ZaSu Pitts, and Claude Allistair.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael and Terrence Rafferty.)

The Abyss—This undersea epic is more complex technically than the previous films written and directed by James Cameron—"The Terminator" and "Aliens"—and, disastrously, it aims for emotional complexity as well. The main characters are an estranged married couple (Ed Harris and Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio) who are forced to work together in an emergency salvage operation—searching the depths for a nuclear submarine that met with a mysterious accident. Cameron wants to turn this routine plot into a metaphor for the couple's attempt to salvage their relationship. Although that isn't a very subtle idea, he might have managed to put it over if he had concentrated on the action and let the meanings take care of themselves. But the action sequences are confusingly edited, the dialogue is painfully explicit, and the B-movie suspense devices he uses tend to violate the integrity of the metaphor. The big message is: You have to touch bottom—way, way down there—before you can see the light. Michael Biehn plays the villain.—T.R. (Reviewed in our issue of 9/4/89.) (Gotham Cinema, Chelsea Cinemas, and Worldwide Cinemas. . . . ¶ Movieland 8th Street Triplex; through Sept. 21.)



At the Biograph Cinema, Lucille Ball in "Miss Grant Takes Richmond"

And Then There Were None (1945)—The Agatha Christie murder mystery and play "Ten Little Indians" (known in England as "Ten Little Niggers") gathers together a group of characters and then ticks them off to the nursery rhyme. Ten people are invited to spend a weekend on an island by a host none of them know; on arrival, they are notified by phonograph that their host, in absentia, is going to punish them for various crimes they have committed, and they start keeling over like plague victims. This René Clair version isn't exactly full of life to start with, despite the cast—Judith Anderson, June Duprez, Roland Young, Walter Huston, Mischa Auer, Barry Fitzgerald, Richard Haydn, Louis Hayward, C. Aubrey Smith, Queenie Leonard, and Harry Thurston. The efforts at sprightly, stylish comedy don't gain much momentum. Adapted by Dudley Nichols.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Sept. 26.)

Batman—Tim Burton's powerfully glamorous comic-book epic, with sets angled and lighted like film noir, goes beyond pulp. It has a funky, nihilistic charge, and an eerie, poetic intensity. Michael Keaton is the fabulously wealthy Bruce Wayne, who patrols the sinister nighttime canyons of Gotham City in the guise of Batman, and Jack Nicholson is the sniggering mobster Jack Napier, who turns into the leering madman the Joker. The two are fighting for the soul of the city that spawned them. The movie is underwritten, but it has so many unpredictable spins that what's missing doesn't seem to matter much. It's mean and anarchic and blissful. Written by Sam Hamm, Warren Skaaren (and uncredited others), based on characters created by Bob Kane. With cinematography by Roger Pratt; design by Anton Furst; costumes by Bob Ringwood; a plangent score by Danny Elfman; and songs by Prince. The cast includes Jack Palance, Kim Basinger, Jerry Hall, and Robert Wuhl.—P.K. (7/10/89) (Criterion Center. . . . ¶ Loews 84th Street Sixplex; through Sept. 19. . . . ¶ Movieland 8th Street Sixplex, and Cinema II; through Sept. 21.)

Il Bidone ("The Swindlers"; 1955)—This Fellini film, made directly after "La Strada," wasn't a success in Italy, or in this country, either. The tone is uncertain; one keeps expecting the movie to be something different from the harsh story it turns out to be. Broderick Crawford (in a role conceived for Bogart), Richard Basehart, and Franco Fabrizi are con artists who cheat gullible peasants. The film doesn't quite work, but it isn't negligible; it has some of Fellini's most realistic passages, and Broderick Crawford's remorse for his crimes, and his end, alone on a mountain road, are painful in a simple, direct way. Giulietta Masina plays Basehart's wife. Written by Fellini, Tullio Pinelli, and Ennio Flaiano. In Italian.—P.K. (Cinema Village; Sept. 24.)

The Big Picture—The first feature directed by the actor Christopher Guest is a distressingly mild satire of Hollywood dealmaking in the eighties. Guest and his fellow-screenwriters, Michael Varhol and Michael McKean, frame their jokes about the stupidity of the movie industry with a dreary plot: Nick (Kevin Bacon) makes a student film that gets him a studio deal; he compromises and compromises in his desire for success, becomes an arrogant jerk who abuses his true-blue friends, loses his deal in a corporate reshuffle, learns to be a nice guy again, and finally gets to make his picture, his way. The only reason for seeing "The Big Picture" is Martin Short, who, in the tiny role (uncredited) of Nick's agent, provides ten minutes or so of wild, subversive inspiration. His scenes just explode: every time he's on the screen, you're on the floor. He's done up in a curly wig, his eyes slant upward at an alarming angle (he looks as if he'd had plastic surgery done by Doctor Caligari), and everything he says is nonsense, delivered with the slimy intimacy of show-biz patter. Short makes this fast-talking moron absolutely lovable. It's the best work he has done since the great days of SCTV. Among the other performers, Bacon, J. T. Walsh (as a studio executive), and Jennifer Jason Leigh (as a particularly flaky film student) all have their moments.—T.R. (9/18/89) (59th Street East Cinema.)

Casualties of War—A great, intense movie about war and rape, based on a Vietnam incident of 1966 that was reported in this magazine (October 18, 1969) by the late Daniel Lang. He gave an emotionally devastating account of the actions of a squad of five American soldiers who kidnapped a Vietnamese village girl, raped her, and then covered up their crime by killing her. One of

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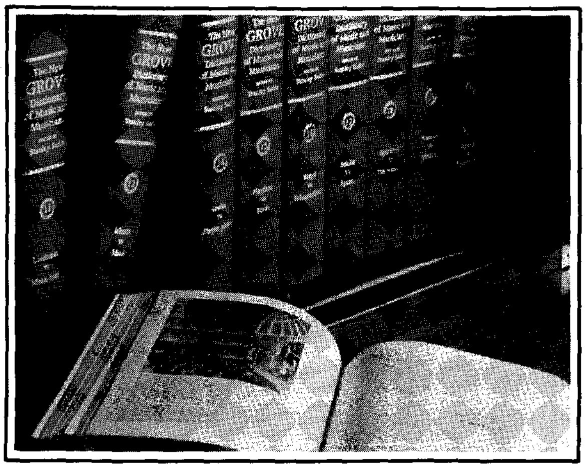

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the five men refused to take part in the rape, and, despite threats and attempts on his life, forced the Army to bring the other four to trial. He's the one who suffers from guilt: he can't forgive himself for his inability to save the girl's life. Directed by Brian De Palma, the movie has the purity of films such as "Grand Illusion" and "Shoeshine"; it's the culmination of his best work. Sean Penn gives a daring performance as the squad's twenty-year-old leader; Michael J. Fox is impressive as the soldier who can't keep quiet; Thuy Thu Le is the dazed, battered girl who haunts the movie long before she's dead. The adaptation (too explicit in a few places) is by David Rabe; the cinematography is by Stephen H. Burum; the music is by Ennio Morricone. —P.K. (8/21/89) (Manhattan Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, Olympia, and National Twin.)

CHOCOLAT—Whatever Claire Denis's first feature is supposed to be about, it proves, at least, that the English don't have a monopoly on swanky colonial torpor. The movie is constructed as an extended flashback: a young Frenchwoman (named France) travelling in Africa remembers her fifties girlhood in a remote outpost of Cameroon, where her father was a district officer. Most of this story consists of smoldering looks exchanged by the girl's beautiful mother (Giulia Boschi) and the family's handsome African "boy," Protée (Isaach de Bankolé). When Maman feels herself becoming too hot and bothered at the sight of the noble black man, she brusquely orders him to fetch something; Protée deals with his frustration by taking a lot of showers. Nothing actually happens. In denying him any kind of release for his pent-up desire, Denis encourages us to think she's making a political point. What she's really doing is dehumanizing him—treating him as a gleaming hunk whose anger and wounded reserve just make him more exotically alluring. "Chocolat" looks pretty good, but it's merde in a fancy wrapper. In French.—T.R. (Bleecker Street Cinema.)

COOKIE—This gangster comedy, directed by Susan Seidelman, is about as disposable as a movie can be. The humor has no edge, despite the violent profession of most of the characters. Emily Lloyd, the British teen-ager who gave such a smashing performance in "Wish You Were Here," plays Cookie, the illegitimate daughter of a mobster (Peter Falk) about to be released from prison. Once he's out, they get to know each other, work together against his enemies, and so on. Lloyd, using a Brooklyn accent, is game and appealing but not very interesting here. Falk is more at home: he has effortless dignity and great timing. The most entertaining thing about this movie is listening to the supporting cast rasp away at their silly dialogue (by Alice Arlen and Nora Ephron). With Michael V. Gazzo, Brenda Vaccaro, and Lionel Stander around, this is the hoarsest cast in memory. Also featuring Dianne Wiest, Jerry Lewis, and Adrian Pasdar.—T.R. (9/4/89) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Chelsea Cinemas, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex.)

DEAD POETS SOCIETY—Robin Williams gives an astonishingly empathic performance as an eager, dedicated prep-school teacher in the late fifties. This teacher talks to his boys about the passions expressed in poetry and helps them release their creative impulses. But one of the boys, soaring on his new confidence, lacks the shrewdness and courage to deal with his rigid, uncomprehending father, and makes a disastrous choice. Directed by Peter Weir, from a script by Thomas Schulman, the picture draws out the obvious and turns itself into a classic. Weir, it appears, is more interested in the elegiac than in the dramatic. Like his "Gallipoli," this film has a gold ribbon attached to it. With Robert Sean Leonard, Ethan Hawke, Josh Charles, Gale Hansen, and Kurtwood Smith and Norman Lloyd.—P.K. (6/26/89) (Gramercy, and Guild. . . ¶ 68th St. Playhouse; through Sept. 19.)

DISTANT VOICES, STILL LIVES—Terence Davies' film, which has won awards at several international festivals, is airless, lugubrious, and overcomposed. It's an autobiographical movie, set in Liverpool in the forties and early fifties, and showing scenes from the life of a working-class family. In essence, it's kitchen-sink drama: Dad's a brute, Mom's a stoic sufferer, the kids rebel in pathetic, stunted ways—everybody's trapped, dead in the water. What's original—and creepy—about Davies' treatment of this familiar material is his relentless aestheticizing of it. He jumbles the chronology, uses a ton of old popular songs (à la Dennis Potter), and even messes with the color process. Davies uses all the art-film techniques at his command to kill his family, embalm them, and rearrange their bodies in a series of lifeless, pristine tableaux. With Freda Dowie, Pete Postlethwaite, Angela Walsh, Lorraine Ashbourne, and Dean Williams.—T.R. (9/4/89) (Quad Cinema.)

Do the Right Thing—The third feature by Spike Lee takes place in the black neighborhood of Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, on a punishingly hot day; the focus of the action is a pizzeria, Sal's Famous, which is apparently the last white-owned business on the block; and the climax is a riot sparked by a monstrous act of police brutality. At its most basic, Lee's intention is to demonstrate how in a racially polarized society the slow accumulation of small irritations can swell to something huge and ugly and lethal. It's a solid idea for a movie, and initially the picture provides its share of incidental pleasures. And, although most of the many characters Lee shows us are types, at least there are a lot of different ones, and their encounters are often funny. But Lee goes wrong by pushing his material to a "powerful" climax, a Scorsese-like explosion of violence: he sacrifices political clarity for the sake of the big statement. He's nimble-witted and passionate, but his movie seems to shout at us rather than speak to us. In addition to writing, producing, and directing, Lee plays the pivotal role of Mookie, the pizza deliveryman. Others in the cast are Danny Aiello (as Sal), Ossie Davis, Ruby Dee, Giancarlo Esposito, Bill Nunn, Rosie Perez, Joie Lee, John Turturro, and Richard Edson; as a trio of middle-aged street-corner philosophers, Paul Benjamin, Frankie Faison, and Robin Harris are responsible for the movie's best, loosest scenes.—T.R. (7/24/89) (23rd St. West Triplex, and Worldwide Cinemas. . . . ¶ Cinema 3. Evenings only.)

Honey, I Shrunk the Kids—A contraption invented by a suburban nerd scientist (Rick Moranis) cuts both his kids and the neighbors' down to size: a quarter of an inch. Unaware of what has happened, and unable to hear their pipsqueak cries, Dad sweeps them into a dustpan, dumps them in a garbage bag, and hauls the bag out to the curb. The kids have to make their way back to the house across the (not very recently mowed) lawn—a long trek for tiny, tiny legs. There are adventures, of course, engineered by the sort of special-effects "magic" that probably even the youngest audiences have learned by now to dread. The real surprise of this movie—which was directed by Joe Johnston, an effects specialist from Industrial Light & Magic, and which carries an immense list of technical credits (including a "Scorpion Crew," a "Bee Sequence Crew," and a "Stop Motion Ant Crew")—is that it's friendly, good-humored, and unpretentious. Johnston manages to scale down not only the kids but also the movie's sense of its own importance. Also with Matt Frewer, Marcia Strassman, and Kristine Sutherland; Jared Rushton, Amy O'Neill, Thomas Brown, and Robert Oliveri are the kids.—T.R. (Embassy.)

Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade—This mediocre third film in the Indiana Jones trilogy—a reprise of the first, "Raiders of the Lost Ark"—is a mixture of cliffhanger and anti-Nazi thriller and religious spectacle. It's enjoyable, but familiar, and the action lacks the exhilarating, leaping precision that the director, Steven Spielberg, is famous for. The only real spin is in the slapstick teamwork of Harrison Ford, as the archeologist-adventurer Indy, and Sean Connery, as Indy's father, a medievalist who's too engrossed in his studies to pay much attention to his daredevil son's triumphs. With River Phoenix playing Indy as a boy, Alison Doody, Denholm Elliott, John Rhys-Davies, and Julian Glover. The screenplay, by Jeffrey Boam, is based on a story devised by the producer George Lucas and Menno Meyjes.—P.K. (6/12/89) (Embassy.)

It's Always Fair Weather (1955)—The title is a misnomer. Comden and Green's tart followup to "On the Town," directed by the same team (Gene Kelly and Stanley Donen), is like a delayed hangover. The three buddies are now Kelly, Dan Dailey, and Michael Kidd; at war's end they swear eternal friendship and promise to meet in ten years. At their reunion, they discover that they hate each other and themselves, and go looking for the hopes they abandoned. The film's mixture of parody, cynicism, and song and dance is perhaps a little sour; though the numbers are exhilarating and the movie is really much more fun than the wildly overrated "On the Town," it doesn't sell exuberance in that big, toothy way, and it was a box-office failure. As the sickened advertising man, Dan Dailey has the best routine in the film—a Chaplinesque, drunken satire of "advertising-wise" jargon. (To a great extent, this is Dailey's movie.) Dolores Gray's role (as a TV star) is too broadly written, but her smooth, glib style is refreshingly brassy, and she has a dazzling number—"Thanks a lot but no thanks"; Cyd Charisse is beautiful and benumbed until she unhinges her legs in the Stillman's Gym number.—P.K. (Biograph Cinema; Sept. 24-25.)

Lethal Weapon 2—Chases, explosions, fights, barrages of insults, the odd moment of manly sentimentality—these are the standard elements of American action movies in the eighties, and the "Lethal Weapon" movies use them with an amazing lack of shame. There's lots of comedy, but no real relief: the punch lines slam into our brains like cars into plate-glass windows. The only thing that makes this movie at all distinctive is its hero, a reckless L.A. cop named Riggs, a role that allows Mel Gibson to zip through the picture like a free electron. Riggs isn't actually trying to kill himself this time (as he was in the first movie), but he's still a wild man and Gibson is still having a great time playing him. It's a mischievous, sprightly performance: he treats the action sequences as if they were slapstick routines. (Unfortunately, the director, Richard Donner, doesn't have as light a touch.) Danny Glover plays his partner, Murtaugh, an easygoing, conservative black family man; he's mostly called upon to react with horror to Riggs' dangerous antics, and the joke of their relationship gets a little tiresome. (The effect, sometimes, is of a white guy doing heroic stuff while his black pal shuffles along beside him. Glover, a good actor, deserves better.) Joe Pesci does small wonders with his supporting role as a ferrety, motor-mouthed money launderer, and Joss Ackland glowers like Alastair Sim as the head villain, a South African diplomat who smuggles drugs.—T.R. (Chelsea Cinemas, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and West Side Cinema. . . . ¶ Sutton; through Sept. 21.)

The Little Thief—Claude Miller's movie, set in the early fifties, is about a rebellious provincial teen-ager named Janine (Charlotte Gainsbourg). The screenplay (by Miller, his wife, Annie, and Luc Béraud) is based on an original story by François Truffaut and Claude de Givray; Truffaut himself reportedly planned to direct a film of the story. This movie bears recognizable traces of the late New Wave director: it's gentle-natured and sympathetic to the young, and its structure is casual and anecdotal, like the Doinel movies. What it lacks is Truffaut's energy. Miller is a perfectly decent craftsman, and the movie is never unwatchable, but nothing drives it forward from one scene to the next, and Janine's lucklessness and her tough-kid spirit don't resonate as Antoine's do. For Truffaut, the story wasn't the most important thing; it's all that's left of him in "The Little Thief." In French.—T.R. (9/4/89) (Lincoln Plaza.)

Parenthood—The script, by Lowell Ganz and Babaloo Mandel, is ambitiously constructed, tracing the relationships of several boomer-age parents with their kids, their siblings, and their own parents. The advantage of this arrangement is that none of the characters are onscreen very long: we have time to get sick of only about half of them, and some—especially the nervous, eager dad played by Steve Martin—are fun to watch. The drawback is that the movie has no drive. The dull title captures the tone precisely: the whole thing has been conceived generically, abstractly, and by the end the director, Ron Howard, is rushing from scene to scene tidying up loose ends, to make sure that each little individual drama gets its point across and that they all add up to a correct answer to the essay question "What is parenthood?" The movie tries very hard, but its wisdom is on the forlorn side. Also with Mary Steenburgen, Rick Moranis, Dianne Wiest, Jason Robards, Harley Kozak, Martha Plimpton, Keanu Reeves, and Tom Hulce.—

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IN BRIEF—Cont'd

T.R. (8/7/89) (34th St. East, Baronet, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, Metro Cinema, and National Twin. . . . ¶ U. A. East; through Sept. 21.)

Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid (1973)—An ambitious, erotic, peculiarly unrealized account of how Garrett (James Coburn) hunts down his best friend Billy (Kris Kristofferson), with Bob Dylan (who sings the score, written by him) appearing as a buddy of Billy's. Sam Peckinpah directed, from a screenplay by Rudolph Wurlitzer. With an amazing cast that includes Jason Robards, Katy Jurado, Rita Coolidge, Emilio Fernandez, Slim Pickens, Chill Wills, John Beck, Harry Dean Stanton, Peckinpah, Wurlitzer, and Elisha Cook. Probably nobody involved was very happy about the results; Dylan doesn't come off at all.—P.K. (Cinema Village; Sept. 25-26.)

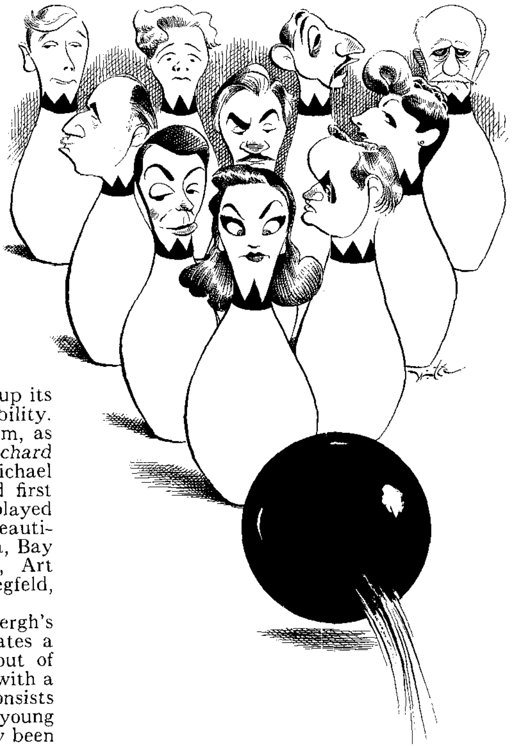
Repulsion (1965)—Roman Polanski's British-made, London-set horror film records the deterioration of a murderous, terrified Belgian girl, played by Catherine Deneuve. The script, by Polanski and Gerard Brach, seems completely shaped for the camera; the approach is so objective, so external, that the film doesn't raise questions about this foreign girl's estrangement and loneliness, doesn't offer explanations of her madness. It just stays on her—on her hallucinations and her fantasies of being in danger, and on the actual reprisals she takes against anyone who comes her way. It's clinical Grand Guignol, and the camera fondles the horrors: the high spot is a man being slashed in the face with a straight razor—until he's cut to death. (If you're too scared to look you still hear the slashing sounds.) Undeniably skillful and effective, all right—excruciatingly tense and frightening. But is it entertaining? You have to be a hard-core horror-movie lover to enjoy this one. With Yvonne Furneaux, John Fraser, Ian Hendry, Patrick Wymark, Renee Houston, James Villiers, and Polanski in a bit.—P.K. (Thalia SoHo; Sept. 22-23.)

Sea of Love—This romantic thriller, written by Richard Price and directed by Harold Becker, has a simple and rather familiar story: a cop (Al Pacino) investigating a series of murders falls in love with one of the suspects. But the movie isn't entirely predictable; it provides plenty of surprises, odd little riffs that keep us alert. And Pacino is amazing. He's playing a middle-aged, divorced, depressed, semi-alcoholic man who exposes himself to great peril by conducting an affair with a young woman who might be a killer. The actor's face has a saggy, disappointed look now, but there's something hopeful, a wary avidity, in his eyes. In this role, he seems to be startling himself with his own vitality. His abandon precisely matches the character's; it's scary and exciting. Barkin is perfectly cast as an ambiguous object of desire; she can look very soft or very, very hard, and the camera doesn't know quite what to make of her. It's a consistently entertaining movie, although Becker's direction has a tendency to flatten the highs in the material. (And Price's script, full of sharp dialogue and smart ideas, nevertheless has a few characteristic lapses—most damagingly, a slackening of inspiration toward the end.) The picture never does resolve the tension between its safe, formulaic elements and its more original ones. It likes the idea of romantic recklessness, but it won't give up its professionalism, its habits of respectability. Also with John Goodman (in good form, as the hero's partner), William Hickey, Richard Jenkins, Christine Estabrook, and Michael Rooker. (The title song, a pop ballad first recorded by Phil Phillips in 1959, is played throughout the movie, and it works beautifully.)—T.R. (9/18/89) (Bijou Cinema, Bay Cinema, Coronet, Loews Orpheum, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Ziegfeld, and Metro Cinema.)

sex, lies, and videotape—Steven Soderbergh's smooth, handsome first feature generates a fair degree of psychological tension out of next to nothing. It's a triangle drama with a cunning little kink in it. The triangle consists of Ann (Andie MacDowell), a beautiful young Southern woman who has "never really been that much into sex"; her husband, John (Peter Gallagher), a sleazy yuppie lawyer; and her younger sister, Cynthia (Laura San Giacomo), who's sleeping with John. The kink is an old college pal of John's, named Graham (James Spader), a soft-spoken drifter who comes to town and changes everybody's life. Graham has sworn off sex, because, he says, it's the only way for him to stay honest; he's impotent, except when he's watching one of his dozens of home videos—all of them interviews he has conducted with women about sex. He's like a retired gunslinger, a laconic hombre who won't pull his artillery out of its holster because he's seen too much killin' already. This is "Shane" remade as a Southern psychodrama. But there's some real conviction in it—a mixed-up fervor that keeps us watching.—T.R. (8/7/89) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Plaza, Waverly, and Cinema Studio.)

Shirley Valentine—Willy Russell, who wrote the play (and the movie) "Educating Rita," gives us another Englishwoman learning a thing or two about life. This time, it's a housewife in her forties whose kids are grown and gone and whose husband is so unresponsive that she spends a lot of time talking to the kitchen wall. A friend persuades her to come along on a two-week holiday in Greece, and Shirley, away from her dull husband and her constricted life, starts to enjoy herself for the first time since her adolescence. But she's not just having a fling or reliving her giddy youth—the writer wants us to understand that she's experiencing deeper, maturer pleasures. Russell's script is an adaptation of his play, which was a monologue. Though this isn't a one-woman show anymore, it's still a showcase for perky, round-faced Pauline Collins. She's very likable, and her performance is mercifully restrained. Lewis Gilbert's direction is long on maturity and short on pleasure: the picture moves at a careful, measured, guided-tour pace. By the end, poor Shirley seems more than ever like a lost soul: an Edna O'Brien character who woke up and found herself on "The Love Boat." Also with Tom Conti.—T.R. (9/4/89) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews Tower East, and Loews Paramount.)

Smiles of a Summer Night (1955)—Ingmar Bergman achieves one of the few classics of carnal comedy: a tragicomic chase and roundelay that raises boudoir farce to elegance and lyric poetry. This film is the culmination of Bergman's "rose" style; as writer and director, he ties up his persistent, early battle-of-the-sexes themes in an intricate plot structure. And in this fin-de-siècle houseparty setting, with its soft light, its delicate, perfumed atmosphere, and its golden pavilion, the women are all beautiful and epigrams shine. The film becomes an elegy to transient



"And Then There Were None"

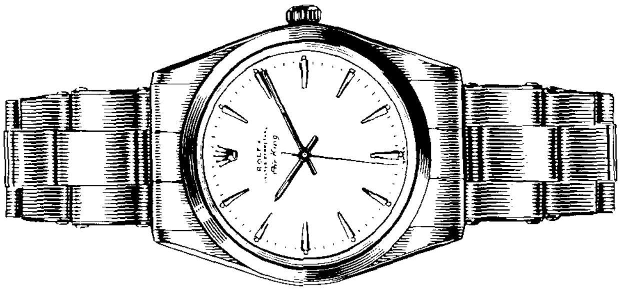
love; a gust of wind, and the whole vision may drift away. As the hostess, the stage actress trying to win back the lawyer she loves, there is the great Eva Dahlbeck (in one inspired, suspended moment she sings "Freut Euch des Lebens"). Ulla Jacobsson is the lawyer's virgin wife; Harriet Andersson, a blonde here but as opulent and sensuous as in her earlier roles, is the impudent, love-loving maid; Margit Carlquist is the proud, unhappy countess. Gunnar Björnstrand is the lawyer, Björn Bjelvenstam is his son, Jarl Kulle is the strutting count, and Naima Wifstrand is the actress's aged mother, who is carried about for her game of croquet. With Åke Fridell as the groom, and, in a bit part, Bibi Andersson. In Swedish.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Sept. 24.)

The Thin Man (1934)—Directed by the whirlwind W. S. Van Dyke, the Dashiell Hammett detective novel took only sixteen days to film, and the result was one of the most popular pictures of its era. New audiences aren't likely to find it as sparkling as the public did then, because new audiences aren't fed up, as that public was, with what the picture broke away from. It started a new cycle in screen entertainment (as well as a "Thin Man" series, and, later, a TV series and countless TV imitations) by demonstrating that a murder mystery could also be a sophisticated screwball comedy. And it turned several decades of movies upside down by showing a suave man of the world (William Powell) who made love to his own rich, funny, and good-humored wife (Myrna Loy); as Nick and Nora Charles, Powell and Loy startled and delighted the country with their heavy drinking (without remorse) and unconventional diversions. In one scene Nick takes the air gun his complaisant wife has just given him for Christmas and shoots the baubles off the Christmas tree. A married couple, Albert Hackett and Frances Goodrich, wrote the script. The cast includes the lovely Maureen O'Sullivan (not wildly talented here), the thoroughly depressing Minna Gombell (her nagging voice always hangs in the air), and Cesar Romero, Harold Huber, Edward Brophy, Nat Pendleton, Edward Ellis (in the title role), and a famous wirehaired terrier, called Asta here. Warning: There's a lot of plot exposition and by modern standards the storytelling is very leisurely.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Sept. 21.)

Tom Jones (1963)—Tony Richardson whizzes through the Fielding novel, pausing for a marvellous, lewd eating scene. With Albert Finney, Hugh Griffith, Edith Evans, George Devine, Joan Greenwood, Diane Cilento, Joyce Redman, and many others. The script is by John Osborne.—P.K. (Paris.)

When Harry Met Sally . . .—Rob Reiner's movie, from a script by Nora Ephron, takes a screwball-comedy idea and inflates it like a rubber raft. Harry (Billy Crystal) and Sally (Meg Ryan) meet in the late seventies, rub each other the wrong way, and then, after breaking up with their partners, become close friends; all the while, they're conducting a running debate on the question "Can a man and a woman ever be just friends, without sex getting in the way?" It's a Rohmer movie played as a sitcom. Crystal muddles through amiably, but Ryan flounders: the filmmakers give her impossible, unplayable scenes, and all she can do is be adorable. The movie keeps telling us that it's real and truthful and universal. Everything in it seems false. Also with Carrie Fisher and Bruno Kirby.—T.R. (8/7/89) (Beekman, Waverly, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, and Regency.)

Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown—The most original pop writer-director of the eighties, Pedro Almodóvar is Godard with a human face—a happy face. The artificial is what sends him sky high, and the Madrid of this film is (as the closing song has it) "Puro Teatro." This is a movie where after a while you can't tell sexy from funny. Pepa (Carmen Maura), an actress who works in TV and commercials, turns on her answering machine and learns that she has been jilted. Infuriated, she dashes around, on spike heels, in a short, tight skirt, trying to confront her longtime live-in lover, the elegant, vain Iván (Fernando Guillén). The women of the title include Iván's early lover (Julieta Serrano), his new lover (Kiti Manver), and two (Rossy De Palma and María Barranco) who are involved with his son (Antonio Banderas). Sleek-legged and chic, they run the theatrical gamut. In Spanish.—P.K. (11/14/88) (Bleecker Street Cinema.)



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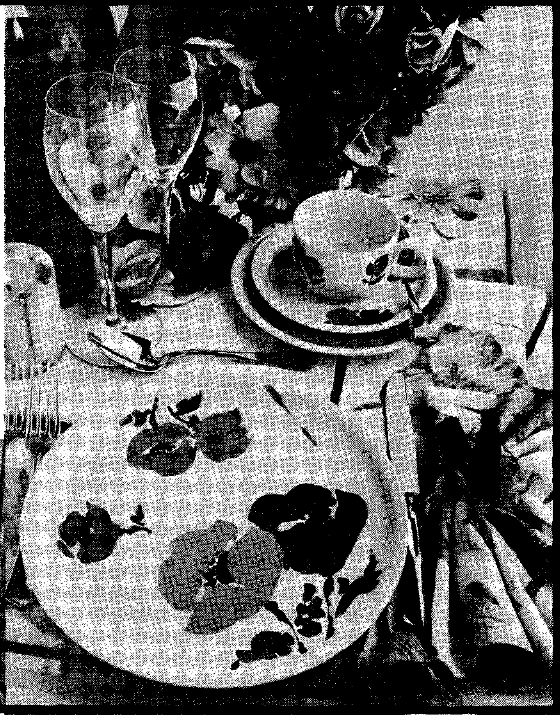

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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

A FRIEND writes from London on hotel stationery:

My son was due in at Heathrow Airport at nine-forty last night, flying from New York, and about noon yesterday, a Sunday, lying around in my hotel room reading the Sunday papers and drinking coffee, I started to think about him on a plane and got the jitters. He is twenty and has flown to Europe on his own before and could find his way to the hotel O.K., but I am a father who is susceptible to jitters, and I can't talk myself out of them. I think about a plane over the ocean with my progeny aboard and pretty soon the plane wobbles, and then I need to take a walk.

The neighborhood here isn't so different from parts of Manhattan, except that the streets are named George, New Cavendish, St. Vincent, Weymouth, Paddington, Devonshire, Nottingham, and Marylebone High Street. The last isn't so different from a New York shopping street, except for the ironmonger's, the photocopy centre, the café offering takeaway food, the shops with "To Let" signs in the windows, a pub called The Rising Sun, the red brick façades and knobby roofs out of Dickens, and the Mobil station selling unleaded premium for forty-eight pence per litre.

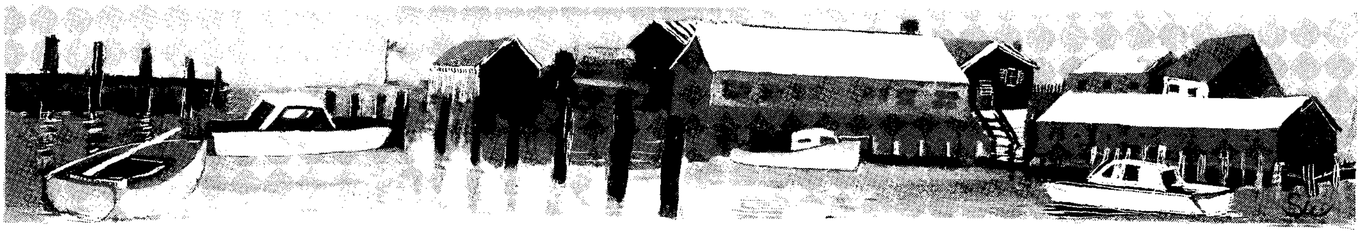
Facts such as these help to calm down a father who is suffering from sudden propulsive anxiety, the sort that every parent knows well. The last time I travelled in Europe with my son, we rode a train to West Berlin, and at the last station in East Germany grim squads of border guards came aboard and searched the car, and I had a sudden, stark fear that the guard who was studying his passport picture might notice the tones of green in his long hair and pull him off the train and find marijuana in his bag and we would enter into a bureaucratic hell that would occupy our lives for the next three years. My skin got tight at the thought of it; my nose trembled. This is the sort of fear I am capable of. My son came into the world, after forty-eight hours of labor, in a teaching hospital where the staff seemed to be a few chapters behind the one my wife and I were on. Since then, I've worried about him pretty consistently. Facts are consoling, compared with what a parent can imagine. The plane shook from side to side, and loud snapping and whirring noises could be heard from below.

The outstanding fact of Marylebone High Street lay just north, across from the corner of Beaumont. In a lot between a bakery and a school (where, beginning on Monday, September 25th, the Westminster Adult Education Institute was offering classes in Calligraphy, Vegetarian Cookery, Welsh 1, Navigation [Day Skipper], Guitar, Transactional Analysis, and Jazz Dance and Fitness for fifty-five pence per hour) was a little park behind an iron fence, about two storefronts wide and forty feet deep. Close to the fence was a white obelisk about eight feet high marking the burial place of Charles Wesley ("Crown'd through the mercy of thy Lord/ With a free full immense reward"), the hymn writer and a founder of Methodism. The park was paved with bricks and stone. Inside were tombstones set into the brick walls and some in the pavement. Six wooden benches faced a sunken stone floor about ten yards square, which was, according to a plaque on the back wall, the exact site of the old parish church of Marylebone, built in 1400, where Francis Bacon was married (1606), and Richard Brinsley Sheridan (to Miss Linley, in 1773), and where Lord Byron was baptized (1788).

Facts—you could sit on a bench and contemplate them one at a time or all together. Death, for one. In the center of the stone floor was a tablet beneath which lay Lady Abigail Hay, and around her, according to another plaque on the wall, lay the following:

EDWARD FORSET *Lord of the Manor* 1630
SIR EDMUND DOUCE *Cupbearer to 2 Queens* 1644
CLAUDIUS DE CRESPIGNY AND HIS WIFE 1695
MARIA DE VIERVILLE *French refugees* 1708
JAMES FIGG *Pugilist* 1734
EDMOND HOYLE *Writer on games* 1769
JAMES FERGUSON *Astronomer* 1776
ALLAN RAMSAY *Painter* 1784

I strolled along the wall, reading



tombstones, until one of them set my teeth on edge. It read:

> To the Memory of
> Mrs HESTER WILTON
> Widow of WILLIAM WILTON Gent
> The untimely loss of her only Son
> who died
> at Tenna on Christmas Day 1792
> after being Wreckd in the
> *Winterton Indiaman*
> brought on the Illness of which
> She died August the 24th 1800
> Aged 56

This struck too close. I am forty-seven, and my only son was over the ocean. I could understand how the death of a child could bring on an illness that would last seven and a half years and finally kill you. The plane bucked and dove; the lights went out. I turned away, then turned back and wrote the inscription down on a blank check, the only paper I had on me. A dignified gray-haired lady watched me from the sidewalk. She wore a brown coat, a blue skirt, and black stockings, and carried a cane. Perhaps she saw I was an American and thought I was trying to buy the park, but all I wanted was Hester Wilton's epitaph, and when I got it I headed back down Marylebone High Street toward the hotel, where my son would be arriving, by cab from the airport, in about three hours. Somewhere between there and The Rising Sun, it struck me that I could fill up some of that time by simply taking the Underground out to Heathrow and meeting him at the gate.

I caught a train at the Baker Street station at eight-thirty and got off at Green Park to change to the Piccadilly line, where an electric sign over the platform told us patrons exactly how long until the next train: "HEATHROW . . . 1 MIN," it said, and a minute later in she came. We rolled into Terminal 4 at Heathrow at nine-fourteen. I took the escalator upstairs and found that British Airways Flight 178, due in from J.F.K. at nine-forty, had landed at nine. About ten limo drivers waited for their customers, along with forty or fifty of us civilians, including the actor Peter O'Toole, in a gray tweed suit, who was waiting, it turned out, for a lanky, elegant woman pushing a cartload of luggage, and a boy of about nine in a blue blazer. He raced into Mr. O'Toole's open arms and was hoisted up and kissed twice, and soon after him came my son, twenty, with a guitar on his back, and wearing one of my old shirts and a pair of black pants with white paint stains on it. He grinned, and we shook hands.

The flight had been bumpy, he said, but the time had gone by fast. He had eaten a roast-beef dinner, watched "Field of Dreams," and read two chapters of a biography of Bob Dylan. "It's good you came out to the airport," he said. "I forgot the name of the hotel. I wrote it on a slip of paper and then left it at the apartment."

I asked him the classic fatherly question, a line that probably dates back to long before Hester Wilton's time: "What would you have done if I hadn't been here?" I recognized its classicism even as I said it.

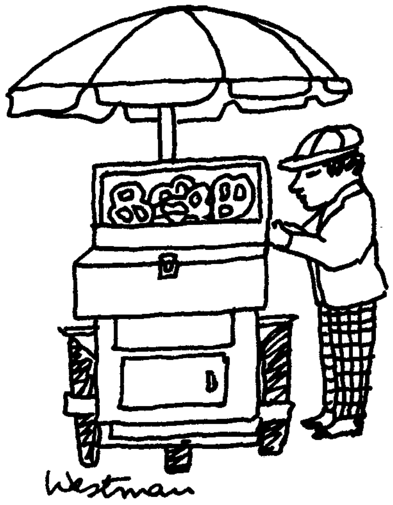
"I'd have gone into the city and remembered it," he said cheerfully.

• •

Altimeter Man

A PERSON who specializes in hand-held altimeters will always know how high he is, but may have difficulty keeping his bearings. This proposition was tested and proved the other day in Fort Tryon Park, where we accompanied William Peet, of West Allenhurst, New Jersey, an engineer trained at M.I.T., who has pretty much cornered the American market in high-precision pocket machines that disclose one's altitude with respect to sea level. If Peet has a mission, manifestly it is not to replace the magnetic compass but to offer a supplement—an additional bit of gear with a utility of its own—for those who walk in wild terrain.

Fort Tryon Park, near the George Washington Bridge, essentially consists of two conical hills, which range in elevation from about thirty feet to two hundred and fifty. They are steep and, in places, sheer. On one summit is the Cloisters, medieval outpost of the Metropolitan Museum, surrounded by descending woods. Peet dropped from sight there, among the trees. When he came back, half an hour later, he handed us a topographic map that he had marked with an X. He said he had hidden a miniature Statue of Liberty at the X, and invited us to find it. We, in our urban way, naturally had a compass in a case on our belt. We spurned, for the moment, supplemental instruments of any kind, and, with map in hand, departed.



From the northeastern corner of the Cloisters, Peet's X was on a bearing of 44 true. "Nothing to it," we said to ourself. "Just follow that bearing and look for the prize." We followed the bearing and looked over an abyss. Large outcrops of Manhattan schist reinforce the hill. Forty-four true involved suicide, and we were not prepared to make a commitment. Deciding instead to approach the incline from below, we went down a circuitous path to the bottom of the park, where we emerged from the natural woods and entered a grove of plane trees protruding from the asphalt of a playground, where children were sliding and swinging and climbing on jungle gyms under small steepled roofs. The playground was in the acute angle formed by Riverside Drive and Broadway over the Dyckman Street station of the A train. This intersection serves the Thirty-fourth Precinct as Times Square serves the Fourteenth. Inwood Liquors. The Cloisters Café. A McDonald's with a large American flag reefed a few turns around a horizontal pole.

McDonald's proved to be the best base point for a shot through the playground and back into the woods. Peet's X was now on a heading of 272—close to due west of the Chicken McNuggets. Compass in hand, we followed the bearing back across Broadway, back across the playground from tree to target tree, then into the rising forest. There was much understory—bushes, thick vines—to break through. We broke into leafy, cavernlike spaces full of Smirnoff bottles of pint size, beer cans in brown bags, some coconut husks and condoms. There were enough foam cups to suggest a football crowd. There were a couple of pillows almost as large as mattresses and in remarkably good condition. We found a doorless fireproof safe, so heavy we could not budge it. We found the door, forty feet away, uniformly dimpled in shapes of crowbar. When we came to a twelve-foot stone retaining wall, we left a Tropicana carton at the foot of the wall, went around the obstacle, returned on the uphill side, and followed the bearing to a height that made no sense. We found no statuette. We returned to the streets to choose another vector.

We walked down Payson toward Dyckman and turned around. On the topographic map, Payson happened to be lined up like an arrow pointing at Bill Peet's X. We took the bearing—222—and retraced our steps. We climbed a five-foot wall and kept going, rising through the trees until we reached the cross hairs of the X. We leaned down to pick up the treasure, but none was there.

We bushwhacked to the summit, where an infinite number of Japanese men came out of a stretch limo and filed into the Cloisters. Sagging to a bench, we admitted frustration. Peet looked patient and pleased. Peet is a tall, quiet man who wears studious glasses. He was also wearing a short-sleeved print shirt. The print was a large-scale map of a small part of Maine. Spreading before us an array of altimeters, he said, "Try these."

We chose one for each hand. We chose a Model 88, good to eighteen thousand feet, temperature compensated, with a sixteen-jewel shock-resistant movement, its face scarcely two inches in diameter but designed and calibrated to present with clarity any of nine hundred twenty-foot increments, at each of which it is accurate. We also chose an electronic altimeter, known in steep places as the Ultimeter, whose digital display, in a case 2.7 inches square, presents its elevation in ten-foot jumps.

Peet told us to go down the path until we were between sixty and fifty feet above sea level, then leave the path and go off to the right on a contour through the woods. Before long, we would come to a fallen tree, and then . . .

"To the right?" we asked.

"Yes," said Peet.

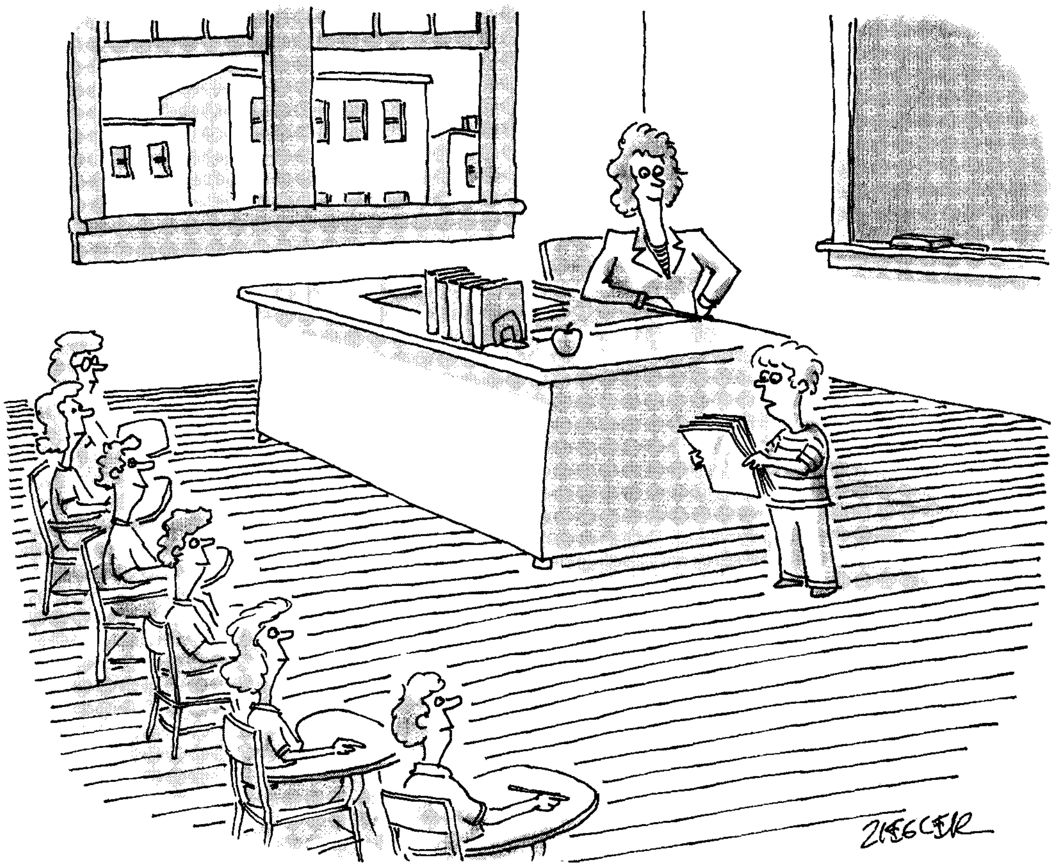
With respect to the path, we had just spent an hour looking to the left, where the legs of his X crossed.

As if they were votive offerings, we bore the altimeters in upturned palms while we made our descent. Steadily, the 88's needle moved. Nervously, the Ultimeter jumped back and forth from level to level but generally took the plunge. This was not an airplane descending through five thousand on its final approach to Newark. This was cutting it fine. These altimeters were positioning a human being in distances not much greater than from a ceiling to a floor. A hundred and forty. A hundred and twenty. A hundred feet. We almost stumbled, tumbled down the hill. Our eyes wouldn't leave the machines.

Just below sixty, where the needle of the Model 88 rested confidently while the numbers in the Ultimeter kept jumping from fifty to sixty to seventy and back, we made our move. We left the path and headed off to the right through the steep woods, keeping the numbers steady, hewing to the contour. We came upon the fallen tree. We stayed on the contour and found the statuette.

"With an altimeter, each contour line is a position line," Peet remarked after we staggered up the hill for the last time. "It is an extra dimension in land navigation."

A person could go around, say, a ravine and reach a destination while walking on a level. To walk on a level requires a tenth as much energy and time as descending or ascending steep grades, Peet said. When you're on a mapped trail somewhere, an altimeter will tell you what contour you're on, and therefore where you are and how far you have to go. In steep country, dense foliage, fog, darkness, blinding snow, you do not need to see landmarks



" 'How I Spent My Summer Vacation,' a treatment by Todd Mozelle, Grade Three."

• •

—as you do with a compass—to find your way. Traversing a mountainside, you follow a contour and avoid lateral drift, which can throw you off line as you sight with a compass from tree to tree to boulder. You can use an altimeter to retrieve game. If you shoot a leopard, you can note its elevation, and go back and seek it at the altitude. Birders in Hawaii have found elusive species by learning the altitudes where they nest. Hand-held altimeters were once bulky to the point of impracticality, but refined technology has trimmed their design. Geologists looking for gold in Idaho last summer acknowledged that their altimeters were the most precious instruments they carried, and were indispensable in heavy timber. The exploration companies insisted that every rock sample be marked with an elevation. If a rock tested positive, they would need to return to the source. For want of an altimeter, they might repeat the legend of Lost Dutchman's Mine.

Our mind developed lateral drift. We saw ourself using altimeters for purposes of which Peet may not have dreamed. What is the altitude of John McGillicuddy, C.E.O. of Manufacturers Hanover Trust, at his desk at Forty-eighth and Park? (One hundred and thirty-five feet.) What is the altitude of John Reed, chairman of Citicorp, Fifty-fourth and Park? (Seventy-five feet.) Where is the highest lawyer in New York? (Arnold Schickler, World Trade Center, twelve hundred and seventy feet.) Where is the lowest lawyer in New York? (In every precinct.) What is the altitude of Kathleen Battle, Sixty-fourth and Broadway? (A hundred feet and rising.) What is the altitude of Leona Helmsley, Federal Courthouse, Foley Square? (Fifty feet and falling.) How many buildings rise above the two-hundred-and-fifty-foot line? Two hundred and fifty feet—a calculated, data-based guess—is where the ocean will top out when the ice of Antarctica and Greenland melts. In the history of the earth, only three times has ice appeared in great sheets over the land: in a relatively brief episode six hundred million years ago, in another brief episode three hundred million years ago, and in the ice of the Pleistocene now. These anomalies aside, through forty-six hundred million years nearly all the water on the earth, which is a fixed amount, has been liquid. With an altimeter, we could go around and see who's going to make it when things return to normal. At two hundred and fifty feet above the present sea are the nineteenth floor of the Empire State Building, the twenty-first floor of the Chrysler Building (which stands in a hollow), the nineteenth floor of 30 Rock. The Metropolitan Museum will not make it, the Metropolitan Opera will not make it, the Cloisters will not make it. Of the natural surface of Manhattan, only the south hill in Fort Tryon Park will rise above the water —a tiny island three feet high.

Fort Tryon Park. "You were saying?" we said to Peet.

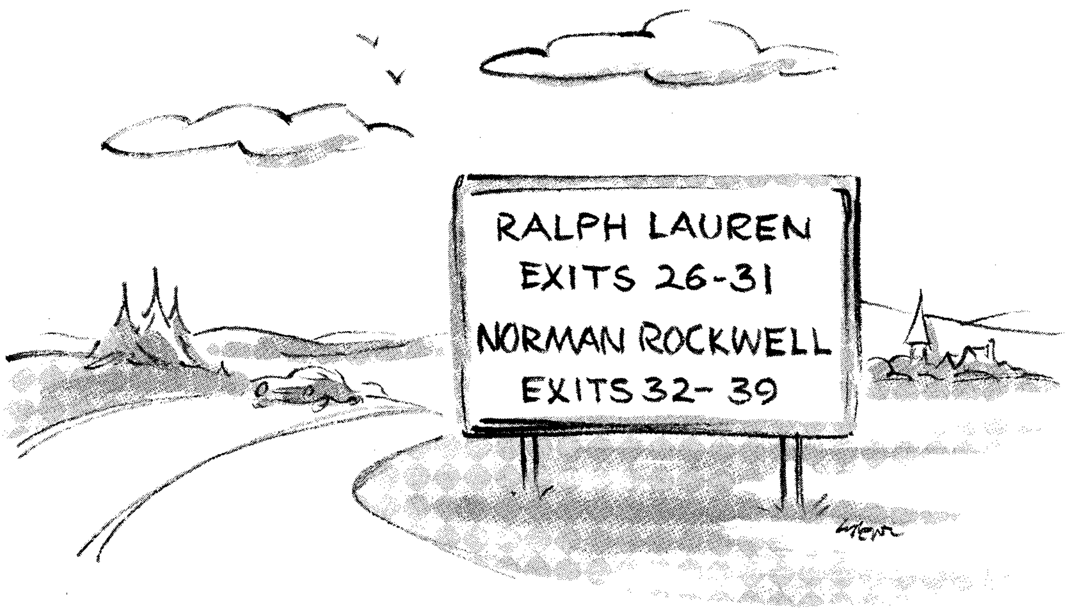
Peet was apologizing about his misplaced X. He had been so confident of his map reading in that small area that he took no bearings when he made the X.

It was a benign mistake, for in so doing he was able not only to demonstrate the utility of his small machines but to make another point, too: Never go into the trackless woods unless you have a compass.

Transport

GEORGE BLISS and Jan Van der Tuin are bikers. Not the motorcycle kind, with a lot of tattoos and no teeth, or the kind who shave their legs and wear skin-hugging Lycra shorts. These guys don't care about going fast. What they like to do is to take bikes apart, mix in a few pieces of junk, and refashion them into vehicles they can live with. The foyer of their workshop and living space, on East Twelfth Street, is cluttered with their inventions, which include the Front Chaise (an adult-sized tricycle with a wicker chaise longue attached to the front with hose clamps), the Orvismobile (a bike with a gray Rubbermaid tilt-truck sidecar, roomy enough to hold Orvis, George's three-year-old mutt), the Whimcycle (a tricycle adorned with a café chair, a beach umbrella, a curvaceous metal frame ending in adjustable headlights, and a horn: the sort of vehicle the Cat in the Hat might arrive in), and the Shrink Bike (another three-wheeler, with a cushioned sidecar designed so that the driver and the rider can look at each other as they travel).

George and Jan are transportation activists. In their view, New Yorkers should bike more and ride in cars, vans, and taxis less. "It isn't natural," George said to us one afternoon at their place, which is named Wood and Metal. "Manhattan is an island—cars have to be funnelled in by bridges and tunnels. And the island is flat and dense, perfect for bikes. The geography *tells* you what belongs here." So they've been developing a range of bikes and trikes, many of them adapted from Danish and Swiss designs, that can carry considerable loads and dart through traffic without adding to the congestion or the foul air of the city



streets. These cycles, which George and Jan like to call human-powered utility vehicles, sport bins in unlikely places—a triangular one on top of the back wheels, say, or a rectangular one between the seat and the front wheel. The shop also has a collection of recumbents—bikes you ride lying down.

Wood and Metal looks like the kind of place that would spawn mutant vehicles. Almost all the furniture is other people's garbage, rehabilitated: the stove, a restaurant-style Garland, came from a dumpster; the couch is made of wooden cartons, foam rubber, and an old blanket; and the love seat used to be a waitress station at Lüchow's and the back slats of some bleachers from Jersey City. "Old stuff is of better quality than new, and our landfills are overflowing," George said. "Restoration just makes sense." He told us he once restored a thousand pounds of plaster he'd found by slapping it on the ceiling in the form of billowing waves.

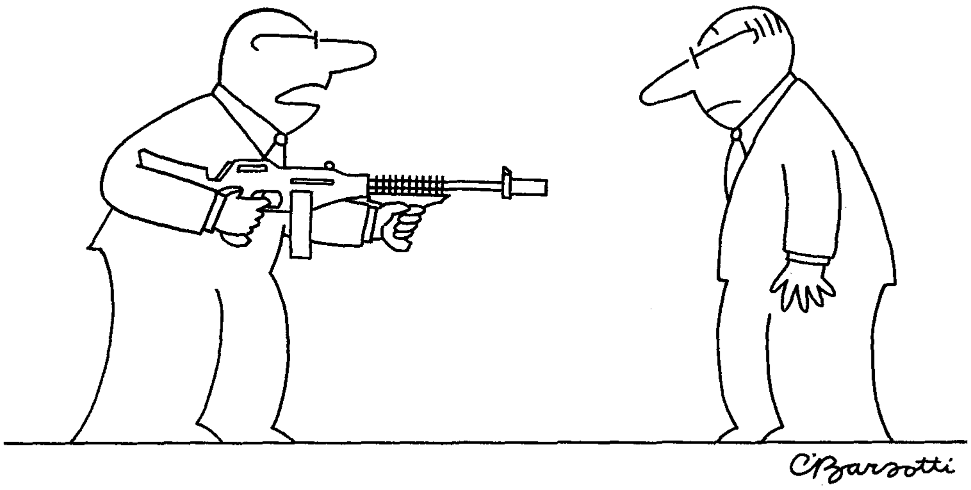
George also told us that he dropped out of Williams in 1975, and that after working for a while as an actor and a carpenter he opened a junk shop, called Anything Goes, on the East Twelfth Street premises and stocked it with things he found. In the early eighties, the van he used for moving junk accumulated so many parking tickets that it was towed away by the city. Around the same time, he became involved with Adam Purple's Garden, a vacant lot in the East Village which a group of neighborhood people had planted with trees and flowers. During the garden's heyday, George publicized it by leaving purple footprints all over town with a contraption he built from a steel drum and foam rubber shaped like soles. He also devised the Dump Trike, which was handy for carrying junk and for hauling manure to the garden. But George didn't decide to devote himself to bikes until 1987, when, at an International Conference on Appropriate Transportation held here in New York, he met Jan, a former organic farmer who had gone into designing bike trailers, because he wanted to transport produce without depending on a truck. Shortly afterward, Jan moved into the shop, and they began collaborating. Anything Goes turned into Wood and Metal this spring.

Over a year ago, George's landlord took exception to his selling junk from what is technically a residence, so now most of George's merchandise is stored in a garage in Harlem, which he can reach in forty-five minutes by Orvismobile, and Wood and Metal has become more of a think tank than anything else. George and Jan keep designing bikes and dreaming about ways to use them. They believe that messenger services, pizzerias, and Chinese restaurants are the most enlightened enterprises around, because they've been using bikes for deliveries for years. "But we'd like to see everybody making deliveries with bikes. Caterers, builders, couriers of all kinds —you name it," Jan told us.

"At heart, I'd like to run a rickshaw business," George said. "We really need one on the Lower East Side, where it's miles between the river and the subway. Cabs are too expensive, they use too little of the huge space they take up, and the yellow gets dirty so fast. All our bikes are dark colors. I'd love to be ferrying old people to the subway or kids to their violin lessons. I'd employ the neighborhood teen-agers, the aimless ones, and teach them how to build their own rickshaw bikes." George and Jan think about starting a taxi service somewhere else, about doing custom work, about selling their prototypes to a manufacturer, but mostly they just lend the bikes out—the Dump Trike to a friend so he could use it to move downtown, for instance, and the Shrink Bike to another friend, who proposed to his girlfriend on it.

Before we met George and Jan, we figured we knew something about riding bikes, but we had never ridden, or even heard of, a Brike. A Brike (the word telescopes the names of its creators, two Oregonians, Brian and Mike) looks like a reclining pogo stick with wheels. You sit on it about six inches above the pavement and pedal with your legs straight out. The handgrips are by your waist, like ski poles, and you steer by swivelling your hips. Jan stuck balloons saying "CYCLISTS AND PEDESTRIANS JOIN FOR A LIVABLE CITY" on a couple of Brikes, put us on one, and led the way down the middle of Second Avenue to St. Mark's Place. A lot of cars stopped and watched. A few teen-agers shouted, "Move that thing!"

Back at East Twelfth Street, an old customer of George's named Marie dropped by for a favor. She had just bought a couch at the Salvation Army down the block and was wondering if someone could take it home to Zeckendorf Towers for her. After enlisting a friend to carry Marie on the Front Chaise, George set off on the Orvismobile to get the couch. Jan invited us to join him on the Shrink Bike, and we followed the others to Union Square. At Thirteenth Street and Fourth Avenue, Jan told us to look up. "See those tennis shoes hanging on the telephone line?" he said. "The first time I was driven on this bike, I noticed them. How else in Manhattan can you really see the sky?"



"War, J.B., is the continuation of business by other means."

• •

THE LIFE AND LETTERS

1

He got taken quick. Then he hung around.
And anyway, he never really wanted
to be anywhere he was—so why not?
Then from out there and for years the prodigal
wrote back to them—indolent letters, lying
about jobs, a wife he found, kids they had.
Things he used to hear people talking about.
He never even bothered to make it up.
Or tried to keep his stories straight.
His wife? A harem of hair colors.
Kids fizzed up like bugs, then fizzled out.
Well, that's the way his life was, in pieces.
Sometimes his head flashed on something fat
and beautiful. He watched it shoot by.
Then he listened for the crash.
Mostly, he was in the dark, drifting.
And, within limits, less of a chump.
He walked away from a lot of stuff.
There were some things he did. This and that.
Lucky, real dirty work never came looking.
Once he dumped a woman. Later she dumped him back.
That's how the game was played out there, where he was.
So that was that.
Well, just say he was down on his luck.
Or starting now to get it together.
Or he was taking things one day at a time.
Sure, one day at a time—for years on end.
One more also-ran playing out the string.
Or, staring straight ahead, out of the blue
he'd tell whoever was drinking alongside him,
Don't look back, champ, your crap could be gaining.
To which—years later—he took to adding,
And don't look up—you could be overtaking
the next guy's you-know-what . . . (Solo guffaws.)
So, what did they think of him, out there?
Joke. Embarrassment. Eyesore. Take your pick.
But how could it matter what anyone said
in that rasping, hissing, clanging tongue of theirs?
To tell the truth, since he'd first come to their country
he hadn't heard a thing that stuck to his bones.
Then every once in a while he sat down and wrote.

2

His words returned—in another's hand:
everyday things people put in their letters,
and howlers only a mother would believe,
and reassuring fluff about the weather,
as if sun were sun, and his rain, like theirs,
could fill the cistern and make green things grow.
And here they were, grinning back at him,
every pitiful, dumb phrase he wrote,
copied over like a holy scripture
in his mother's homespun penmanship
that made his snarled, uncontrollable scrawl
round and plain and easy to read.
Her ABCs were good enough to eat
—bits of dough she'd squeezed, patted, baked
slowly in the little oven of her hands
and strung into necklaces of script.
But if he read those letters at all,
his eyes scribbled some glare before he fed
the page, balled up, to the dark, muttering
demon of trash chained in the corner,
when, drunk or stoned, he plummeted straight down
—with the bulb he never extinguished burning
above his swollen, already aging face.

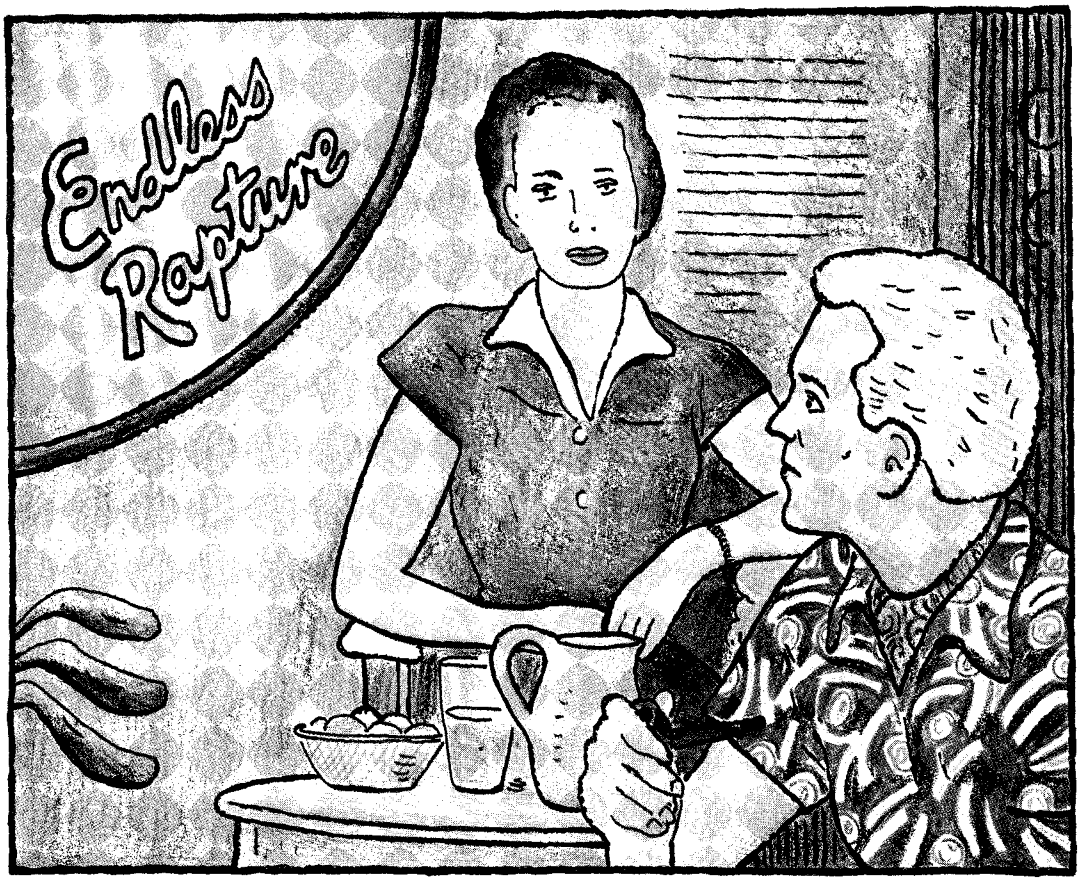
3

And then. And then. And then.
And then no letter came back.
And soon no letter went forward.
Why listen now to people talking?
The demon settled into self-consumption.
And everything was still.
Dust silted over the phantom children
he'd never wanted anyhow;
at the end of its rainbow his wife's hair
came to rest on red—forever;
their house faded in the manuscripts.
Though old now, he was still a son
—though no one's son. A promise, then,
without witnesses anywhere to say
if the promise had been kept or not kept.
But didn't he, having no lands, no house,
no wife, no child, no works, didn't he know
what he had done with his heritage?
Then let their silence mute the judgment,
hush the accusation against him!
And now this little corner where he sat
need be no worse than any other
little corner of the universe.

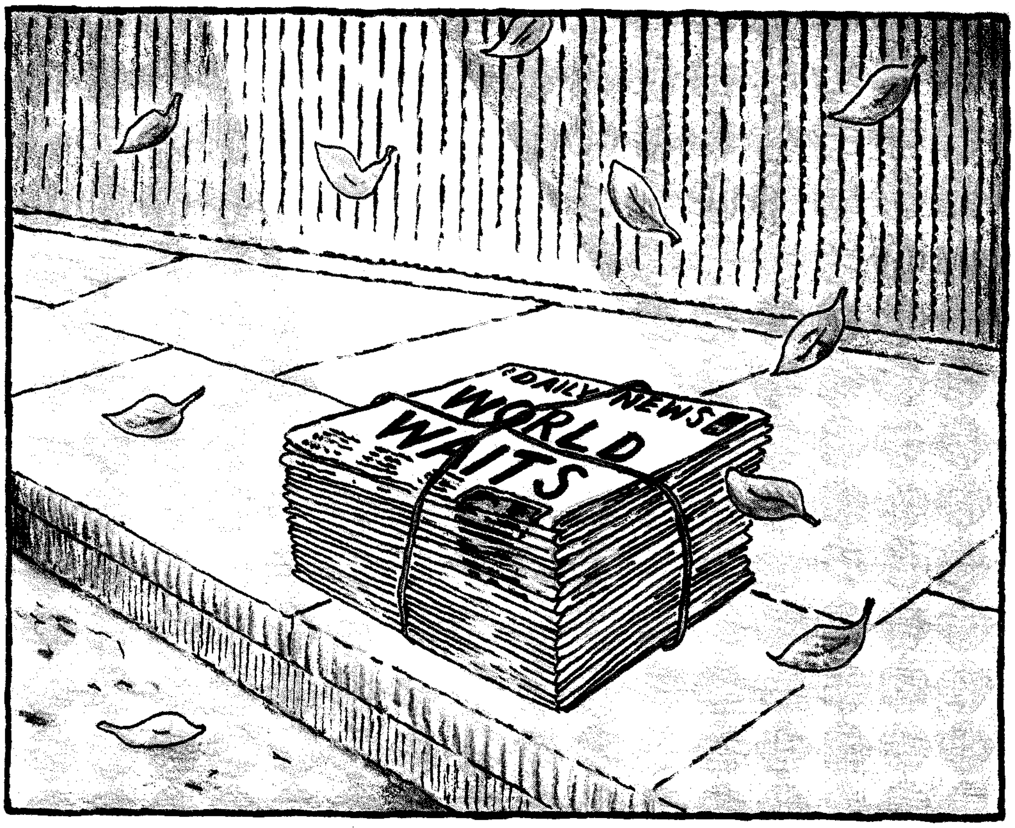
4

And then one day a witness came forward
—from an old pair of pants, from the pocket.
An old piece of paper.
Wrinkled. Worn.
Smudged with the dregs of big numbers.
And under their blur, in palest blue
—blue of the veins of a vanished wrist—
his mother's hand at its homework
was being true to the words it found.
But there, between the words, in the smeared void
he saw his sentence spelled out.
Of his waste life: pain. Of falsity: pain.
It was a lash. A lifeline. *His* lifeline
—flung out to him, laid on his hands, *in* his hand.
With a pencil stub he traced the faint line
of her letters across the yellowed page.
As faithfully as she, as patiently
—as if he need never reach their end
and the words might now become his life—he wrote.
He wrote the date. He wrote, "Dear Son."
  He wrote, "We're glad
the children all are well again and getting A's."
He wrote, "We're also happy that you like your job . . ."
He, too, was happy. He, too, was glad. He wrote.

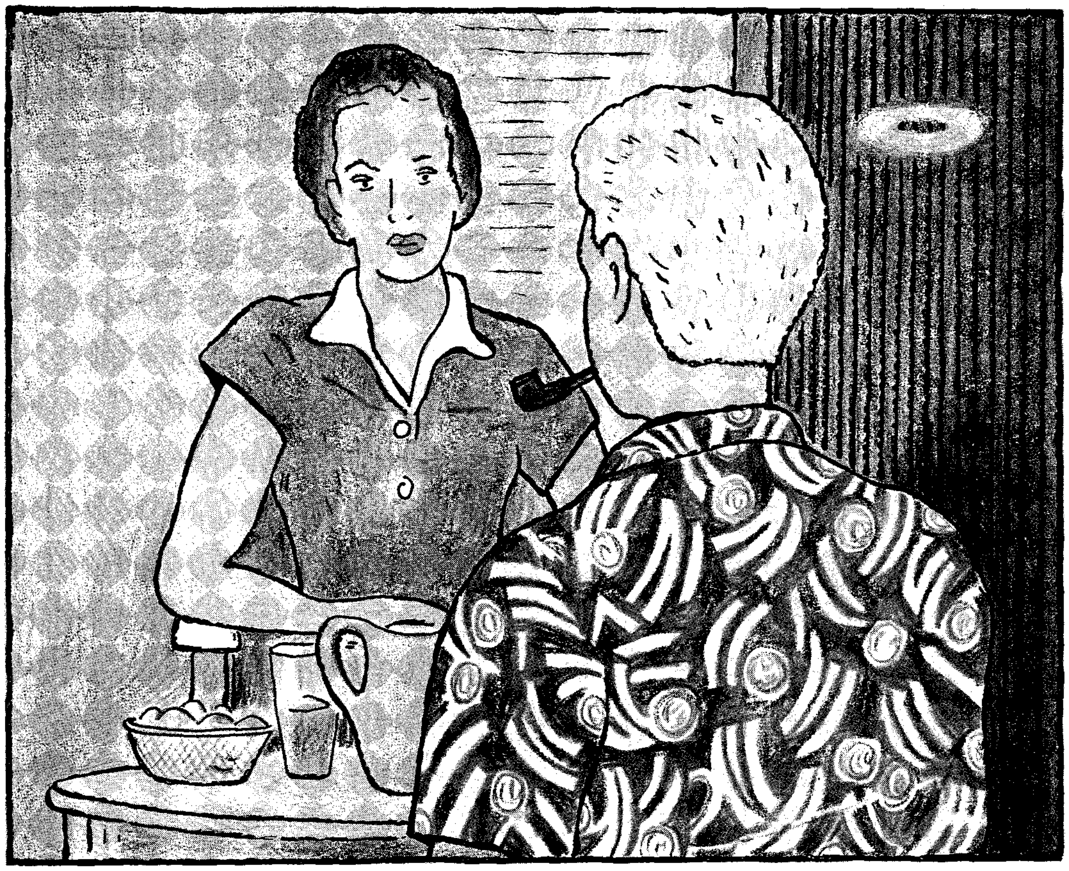
—Irving Feldman


Endless Rapture

AS THEIR EYES MET FOR THAT VERY FIRST TIME, RACHEL FELT HER WHOLE BEING BECOME CONSUMED WITH ALMOST TOTAL INDIFFERENCE.

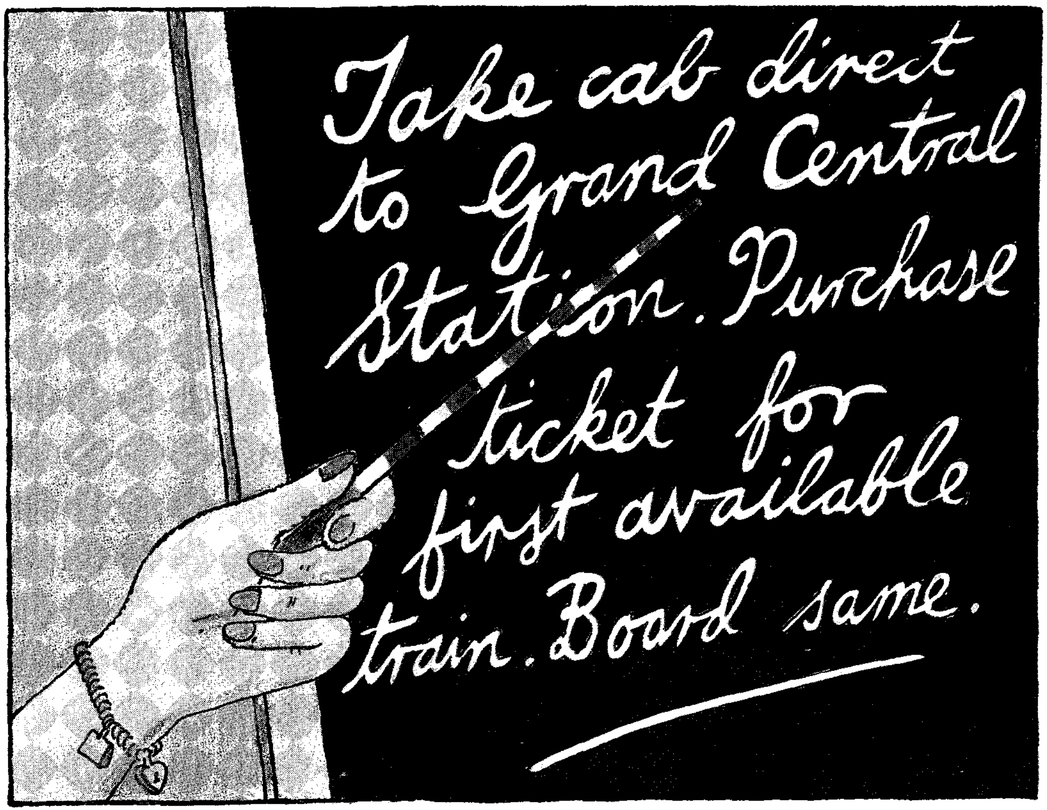

DAILY NEWS
WORLD WAITS

TIME SEEMED TO STAND STILL.



EDGAR BEGAN TO FIND THE TENSION UNBEARABLE. HE LOOKED IMPLORINGLY AT RACHEL AND STAMMERED, "MAKE THINE INNERMOST DESIRES KNOWN TO ME, MY DEAR."

ACCORDINGLY, RACHEL OBLIGED.



Take cab direct to Grand Central Station. Purchase ticket for first available train. Board same.

Glen Baxter

NOTHING TO ASK FOR

INSIDE Mack's apartment, a concentrator—a medical machine that looks like an elaborate stereo speaker on casters—sits behind an orange swivel chair, making its rhythmic, percussive noise like ocean waves, taking in normal filthy air, humidifying it, and filtering out everything but the oxygen, which it sends through clear plastic tubing to Mack's nostrils. He sits on the couch, as usual, channel grazing, the remote-control button under his thumb, and he appears to be scrutinizing the short segments of what he sees on the TV screen with Zen-like patience. He has planted one foot on the bevelled edge of the long oak coffee table, and he dangles one leg—thinner at the thigh than my wrist—over the other. In the sharp valley of his lap, Eberhardt, his old long-haired dachshund, lies sleeping. The table is covered with two dozen medicine bottles, though Mack has now taken himself off all drugs except cough syrup and something for heartburn. Also, stacks of books and pamphlets—though he has lost the ability to read—on how to heal yourself, on Buddhism, on Hinduism, on dying. In one pamphlet there's a long list that includes most human ailments, the personality traits and character flaws that cause these ailments, and the affirmations that need to be said in order to overcome them. According to this well-intentioned misguidedness, most disease is caused by self-hatred, or rejection of reality, and almost anything can be cured by learning to love yourself—which is accomplished by saying, aloud and often, "I love myself." Next to these books are pamphlets and Xeroxed articles describing more unorthodox remedies—herbal brews, ultrasound, lemon juice, urine, even penicillin. And, in a ceramic dish next to these, a small, waxy envelope that contains "ash"—a very fine, gray-white, spiritually enhancing powder materialized out of thin air by Swami Lahiri Baba.

As I change the plastic liner inside Mack's trash can, into which he throws his millions of Kleenex, I block his view of the TV screen—which he endures serenely, his head perfectly still, eyes unaverted. "Do you remember old Dorothy Hughes?" he asks me. "What do you suppose ever happened to her?"

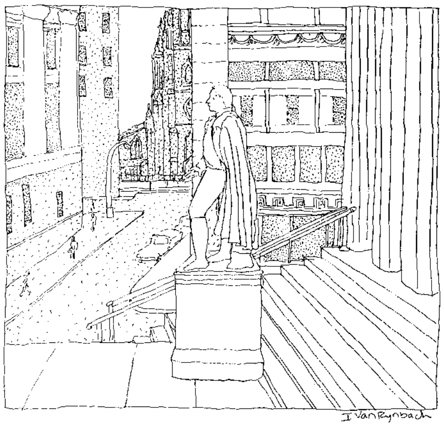
"I don't know," I say. "I saw her years ago on the nude beach at San Gregorio. With some black guy who was down by the surf doing cartwheels. She pretended she didn't know me."

"I don't blame her," says Mack, making bug-eyes. "I wouldn't like to be seen with any grownup who does cartwheels, would you?"

"No," I say.

Then he asks, "Was everybody we knew back then crazy?"

What Mack means by "back then" is our college days, in Santa Cruz, when we judged almost everything in terms of how freshly it rejected the status quo: the famous professor who began his twentieth-century-philosophy class by tossing pink rubber dildos in through the classroom window; Antonioni and Luis Buñuel screened each weekend in the dormitory basement; the artichokes in the student garden, left on their stalks and allowed to open and become what they truly were—enormous, purple-hearted flowers. There were no paving-stone quadrangles or venerable colonnades—our campus was the redwood forest, the buildings nestled among the trees, invisible one from the other—and when we emerged from the woods at the end of the school day, what we saw was nothing more or less than the sun setting over the Pacific. We lived with thirteen other students, in a rented Victorian mansion on West Cliff Drive, and at night the yellow beacon from the nearby lighthouse invaded our attic windows; we drifted to sleep listening to the barking of seals. On weekends we had serious softball games in the vacant field next to the house—us against a team of tattooed, long-haired townies—and afterward, keyed up, tired and sweating, Mack and I walked the north shore to a place where we could watch the waves pound into the rocks and send up sun-ignited columns of water twenty-five and thirty feet tall. Though most of what we initiated "back then" now seems to have been faddish and wrongheaded, our friendship was exceptionally sane and has endured for twenty years. It endured the melodramatic confusion of Dorothy Hughes, our beautiful shortstop—I loved her, but she loved Mack. It endured the subsequent revelation that Mack was gay—any tension on that count managed by him with remarks about what a homely bastard I was. It endured his fury and frustration over my low-bottom alcoholism, and my sometimes raging (and *en*raging) process of getting clean and sober. And it has endured the onlooking fisheyes of his long string of lovers and my two wives. Neither of us had a biological brother—that could account for something—but at recent moments when I have felt most frightened, now that Mack is so ill, I've thought that we persisted simply because we couldn't let go of the sense of *thoroughness* our friendship gave us; we constantly reported to each other on our separate lives, as if we knew that by doing so we were getting more from life than we would ever have been entitled to individually.



In answer to his question—was everybody crazy back then—I say, "Yes, I think so."

He laughs, then coughs. When he coughs these days—which is often—he goes on coughing until a viscous, bloody fluid comes up, which he catches in a Kleenex and tosses into the trash can. Earlier, his doctors could drain his lungs with a needle through his back—last time they collected an entire litre from one lung—but now that Mack has developed the cancer, there are tumors that break up the fluid into many small isolated pockets, too many to drain. Radiation or chemotherapy would kill him; he's too weak even for a flu shot. Later today, he will go to the hospital for another bronchoscopy; they want to see if there's anything they can do to help him, though they have already told him there isn't. His medical care comes in the form of visiting nurses, physical therapists, and a curious duo at the hospital: one doctor who is young, affectionate, and incompetent but who comforts and consoles, hugs and holds hands; another—old, rude, brash, and expert—who says things like "You might as well face it. You're going to die. Get your papers in order." In fact, they've given Mack two weeks to two months, and it has now been ten weeks.

"Oh, my God," cries Lester, Mack's lover, opening the screen door, entering the room, and looking around. "I don't recognize this hovel. And what's that wonderful smell?"

This morning, while Lester was out, I vacuumed and generally straightened up. Their apartment is on the ground floor of a building like all the buildings in this Southern California neighborhood—a two-story motel-like structure of white stucco and steel railings. Outside the door are an X-rated hibiscus (blood red, with its jutting, yellow powder-tipped stamen), a plastic macaw on a swing, two enormous yuccas; inside, carpet, and plainness. The wonderful smell is the turkey I'm roasting; Mack can't eat anything before the bronchoscopy, but I figure it will be here for them when they return from the hospital, and they can eat off it for the rest of the week.

Lester, a South Carolina boy in his late twenties, is sick, too—twice he has nearly died of pneumonia—but he's in a healthy period now. He's tall, thin, and bearded, a devotee of the writings of Shirley MacLaine—an unlikely guru, if you ask me, but my wife, Marilyn, tells me I'm too judgmental. Probably she is right.

The dog, Eberhardt, has woken up and waddles sleepily over to where Lester stands. Lester extends his arm toward Mack, two envelopes in his hand, and after a moment's pause Mack reaches for them. It's partly this typical hesitation of Mack's—a slowing of the mind, actually—that makes him appear serene, contemplative these days. Occasionally, he really does get confused, which terrifies him. But I can't help thinking that something in there has sharpened as well—maybe a kind of simplification. Now he stares at the top envelope for a full minute, as Lester and I watch him. This is something we do: we watch him. "Oh-h-h," he says, at last. "A letter from my mother."

"And one from Lucy, too," says Lester. "Isn't that nice?"

"I guess," says Mack. Then: "Well, yes. It is."

"You want me to open them?" I ask.

"Would you?" he says, handing them to me. "Read 'em to me, too."

They are only cards, with short notes inside, both from Des Moines. Mack's mother says it just makes her *sick* that he's sick, wants to know if there's anything he needs. Lucy, the sister, is gushy, misremembers a few things from the past, says she's writing instead of calling because she knows she will cry if she tries to talk. Lucy, who refused to let Mack enter her house at Christmastime one year—actually left him on the stoop in sub-zero cold—until he removed the gold earring from his ear. Mack's mother, who waited until after the funeral last year to let Mack know that his father had died; Mack's obvious illness at the funeral would have been an embarrassment.

SARDI'S
SARDI'S
2
tf

But they've come around, Mack has told me in the face of my anger.

I said better late than never.

And Mack, all forgiveness, all humility, said that's exactly right: much better.

"Mrs. Mears is having a craft sale today," Lester says. Mrs. Mears, an elderly neighbor, lives out back in a cottage with her husband. "You guys want to go?"

Eberhardt, hearing "go," begins leaping at Lester's shins, but when we look at Mack, his eyelids are at half-mast—he's half asleep.

We watch him for a moment, and I say, "Maybe in a little while, Lester."

LESTER sits on the edge of his bed reading the newspaper, which lies flat on the spread in front of him. He has his own TV in his room, and a VCR. On the dresser, movies whose cases show men in studded black leather jockstraps, with gloves to match—dungeon masters of startling handsomeness. On the floor, a stack of gay magazines. Somewhere on the cover of each of these magazines the word "macho" appears; and inside some of

• •

DARK FLOWERS

I go down, step by step. The house is
quiet, full of sleep.
A child's top is thrown sideways on a chair.
The arms are widespread for action or escape.

I could be undone every single day by
paradox, or what they call in the countryside
blackthorn winter, when
hailstones come with the first apple blossom.

When I was a child a snapdragon was
held an inch from my face. Look, a voice said, this
is the color of your hair. And there it was, my head,
a pliant jewel in the hands of someone else.

I stand in the kitchen doorway.
I turn a switch and the garden grows.
I press my face to the glass: shadows of lilac, of fuchsia, wild
likenesses of black currant—
little clients of suddenness, how
sullen they are at
the margins of the light. They need no rain.
They have no roots. They turn to no morning.

I reach out a hand and they are gone.

—EAVAN BOLAND

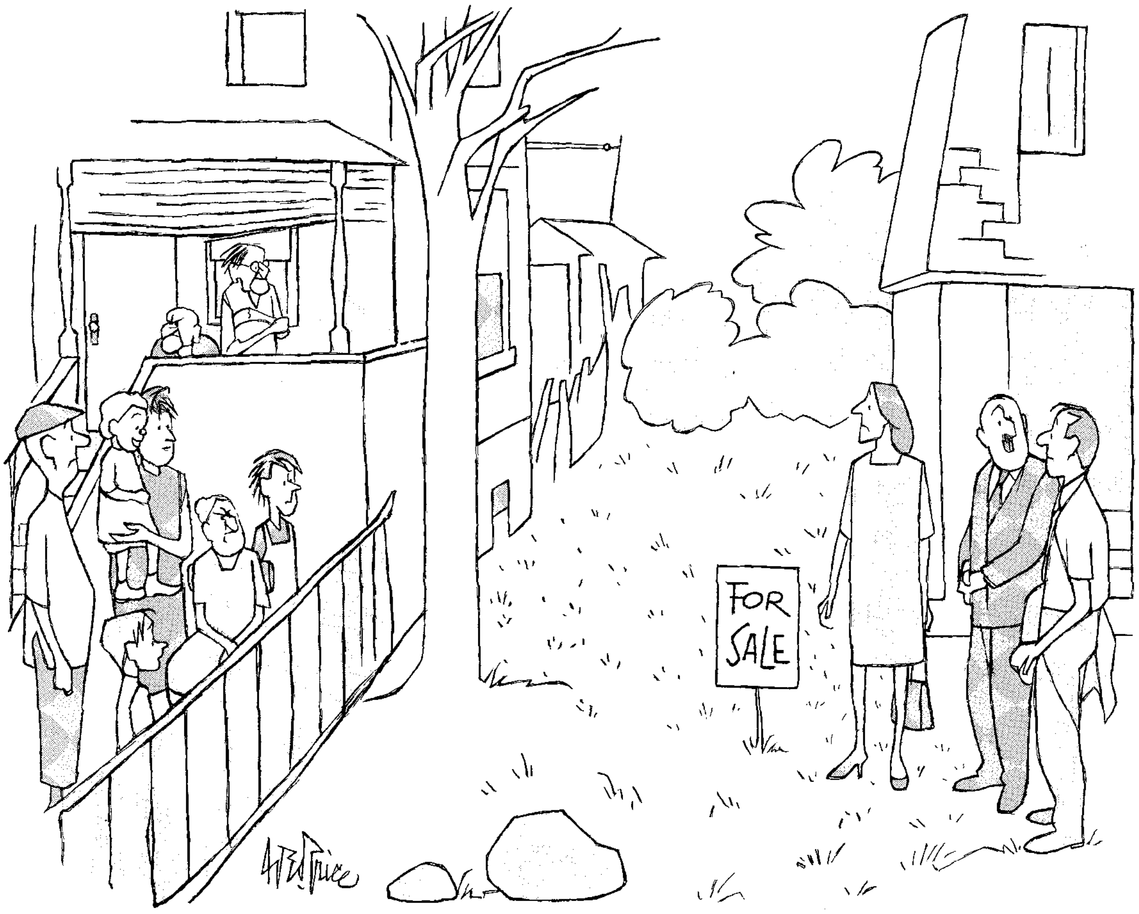
them, in the personal ads, men, meaning to attract others, refer to themselves as pigs. "Don't putz," Lester says to me as I straighten some things on top of the dresser. "Enough already."

I wonder where he picked up "putz"—surely not in South Carolina. I say, "You need to get somebody in. To help. You need to arrange it now. What if you were suddenly to get sick again?"

"I know," he says. "He's gotten to be quite a handful, hasn't he? Is he still asleep?"

"Yes," I answer. "Yes and yes."

The phone rings and Lester reaches for it. As soon as he begins to speak I can tell, from his tone, that it's my four-year-old on the line. After a moment, Lester says, "Kit," smiling, and hands me the phone, then returns to his newspaper.



"Those are the Bellingtons. To know them is to love them."

• •

I sit on the other side of the bed, and after I say hello, Kit says, "We need some milk."

"O.K.," I say. "Milk. What are you up to this morning?"

"Being angry mostly," she says.

"Oh?" I say. "Why?"

"Mommy and I are not getting along very well."

"That's too bad," I say. "I hope you won't stay angry for long."

"We won't," she says. "We're going to make up in a minute."

"Good," I say.

"When are you coming home?"

"In a little while."

"After my nap?"

"Yes," I say. "Right after your nap."

"Is Mack very sick?"

She already knows the answer, of course. "Yes," I say.

"Is he going to die?"

This one, too. "Most likely," I say. "He's that sick."

"Bye," she says suddenly—her sense of closure always takes me by surprise—and I say, "Don't stay angry for long, O.K.?"

"You already said that," she says, rightly, and I wait for a moment, half expecting Marilyn to come onto the line; ordinarily she would, and hearing her voice right now would do me good. After another moment, though, there's the click.

Marilyn is back in school, earning a Ph.D. in religious studies. I teach sixth grade, and because I'm faculty adviser for the little magazine the sixth graders put out each year, I stay late many afternoons. Marilyn wanted me home this Saturday morning. "You're at work all week," she said, "and then you're over there on Saturday. Is that fair?"

I told her I didn't know—which was the honest truth. Then, in a possibly dramatic way, I told her that fairness was not my favorite subject these days, given that my best friend was dying.

We were in our kitchen, and through the window I could see Kit playing with a neighbor's cat in the back yard. Marilyn turned on the hot water in the kitchen sink and stood still while the steam rose into her face. "It's become a question of where you belong," she said at last. "I think you're too involved."

For this I had no answer, except to say, "I agree"—which wasn't really an answer, since I had no intention of staying home, or becoming less involved, or changing anything.

Now Lester and I can hear Mack's scraping cough in the next room. We are silent until he stops. "By the way," Lester says at last, taking the telephone receiver out of my hand, "have you noticed that he *listens* now?"

"I know," I say. "He told me he'd finally entered his listening period."

"Yeah," says Lester, "as if it's the natural progression. You blab your whole life away, ignoring other people, and then right before you die you start to listen."

The slight bitterness in Lester's tone makes me feel shaky inside. It's true that Mack was always a better talker than a listener, but I suddenly feel that I'm walking a thin wire, and that anything like collusion would throw me off balance. All I know for sure is that I don't want to hear any more. Maybe Lester reads this in my face, because what he says next sounds like an explanation: he tells me that his poor old backwoods mother was nearly deaf when he was growing up, that she relied almost entirely on reading lips. "All she had to do when she wanted to turn me off," he says, "was to just turn her back on me. Simple," he says, making a little circle with his finger. "No more Lester."

"That's terrible," I say.

"I was a terrible coward," he says. "Can you imagine Kit letting you get away with something like that? She'd bite your kneecaps."

"Still," I say, "that's terrible."

Lester shrugs his shoulders, and after another moment I say, "I'm going to the K mart. Mack needs a padded toilet seat. You want anything?"

"Yeah," he says. "But they don't sell it at K mart."

"What is it?" I ask.

"It's a *joke*, Dan, for Chrissake," he says. "Honestly, I think you've completely lost your sense of humor."

When I think about this, it seems true.

"Are you coming back?" he asks.

"Right back," I answer. "If you think of it, baste the turkey."

"How could I not think of it?" he says, sniffing the air.

In the living room, Mack is lying with his eyes open now, staring blankly at the TV. At the moment, a shop-at-home show is on, but he changes channels, and an announcer says, "When we return, we'll talk about tree pruning," and Mack changes the channel again. He looks at me, nods thoughtfully, and says, "Tree pruning. Interesting. It's just like the way they put a limit on your credit card, so you don't spend too much."

"I don't understand," I say.

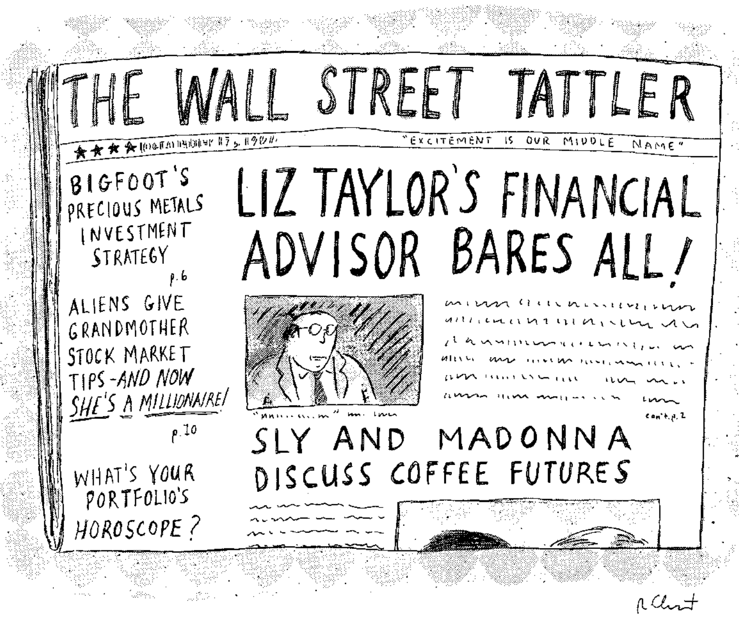
"Oh, you know," he says. "Pruning the trees. Didn't the man just say something about pruning trees?" He sits up and adjusts the plastic tube in one nostril.

"Yes," I say.

"Well, it's like the credit cards. The limit they put on the credit cards is . . ." He stops talking and looks straight into my eyes, frightened. "It doesn't make any sense, does it?" he says. "Jesus Christ. I'm not making sense."

WAY out east on University, there is a video arcade every half mile or so. Adult peepshows. Also a McDonald's, and the rest. Taverns—the kind that are open at eight in the morning—with clever names: Tobacco Rhoda's, the Cruz Inn. Bodegas that smell of cat piss and are really fronts for numbers games. Huge discount stores. Lester, who is an expert in these matters, has told me that all these places feed on addicts. "What do you think—those peepshows stay in business on the strength of the occasional customer? No way. It's a steady clientele of people in there every day, for hours at a time, dropping in quarters. That whole strip of road is *made* for addicts. And all the strips like it. That's what America's all about, you know. You got your alcoholics in the bars. Your food addicts sucking it up at Jack-in-the-Box—you ever go in one of those places and count the fat people? You got your sex addicts in the peepshows. Your shopping addicts at the K mart. Your gamblers running numbers in the bodegas and your junkies in the alleyways. We're all nothing but a bunch of addicts. The whole fucking addicted country."

In the arcades, says Lester, the videos show myriad combinations and arrangements of men and women, men and men, women and women. Some show older men being serviced by eager, selfless young women who seem to live for one thing only, who can't get enough. Some of these women have put their hair into pigtails and shaved themselves—they're supposed to look like children. Inside the peepshow booths there's semen on the floor. And in the old days, there were glory holes cut into the wooden walls between some of the booths, so, if it pleased you, you could communicate with your neighbor. Not anymore. Mack and Lester tell me that some things have changed. The holes have been boarded up. In the public men's rooms you no longer read, scribbled in the stalls, "All faggots should die." You read, "All faggots should die of AIDS." Mack rails against the moratorium on fetal-tissue research, the most promising avenue for a cure. "If it was Legionnaires dying, we wouldn't have any moratorium," he says. And he often talks about Africa, where governments impede efforts to teach villagers about condoms: a social worker, attempting to explain their use, isn't allowed to remove the condoms from their foil packets; in another country, with a slightly more liberal government, a field nurse stretches a condom over his hand, to show how it works, and later villagers are found wearing the condoms like mittens, thinking this will protect them from disease. Lester laughs at these stories but shakes his head. In our own country, something called "family values" has emerged with clarity. "*Whose* family?" Mack wants to know, holding out his hands palms upward. "I mean we *all* come from families, don't we? The dizziest queen comes from a family. The axe-murderer.


THE WALL STREET TATTLER
"EXCITEMENT IS OUR MIDDLE NAME"
BIGFOOT'S PRECIOUS METALS INVESTMENT STRATEGY p.6
ALIENS GIVE GRANDMOTHER STOCK MARKET TIPS-AND NOW SHE'S A MILLIONAIRE! p.10
WHAT'S YOUR PORTFOLIO'S HOROSCOPE?
LIZ TAYLOR'S FINANCIAL ADVISOR BARES ALL!
con't p.2
SLY AND MADONNA DISCUSS COFFEE FUTURES
R. Chast

Even Dan *Quayle* comes from a family of some kind."

But Mack and Lester are dying, Mack first. As I steer my pickup into the parking lot at the K mart, I almost clip the front fender of a big, deep-throated Chevy that's leaving. I have startled the driver, a young Chicano boy with four kids in the back seat, and he flips me the bird—aggressively, his arm out the window—but I feel protected today by my sense of purpose: I have come to buy a padded toilet seat for my friend.

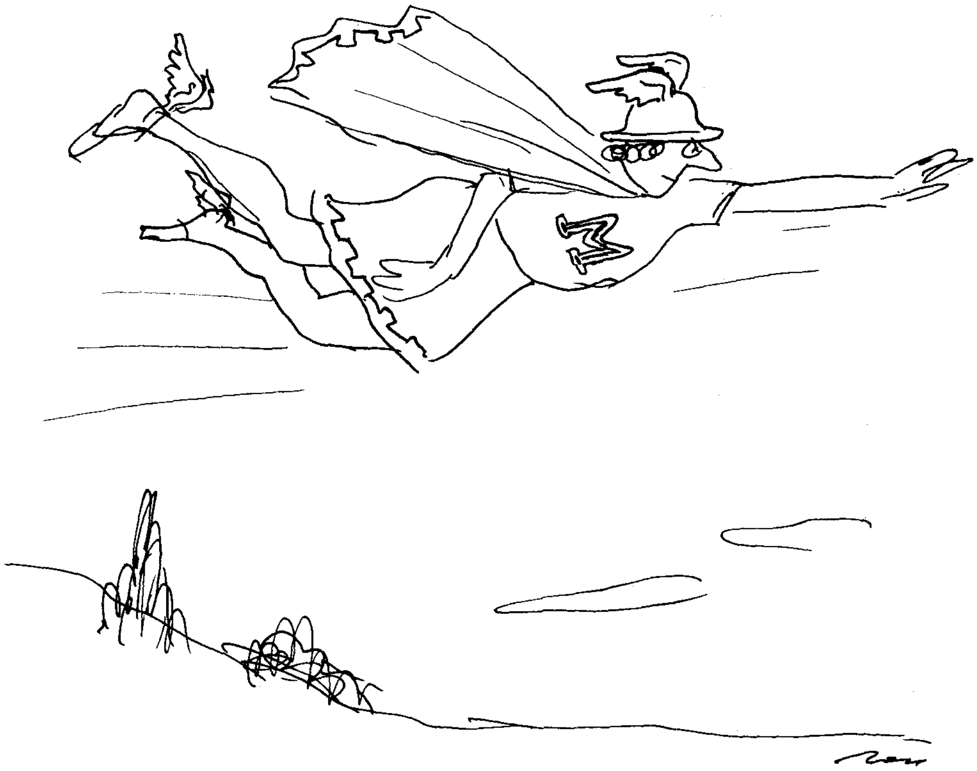
WHEN he was younger, Mack wanted to be a cultural anthropologist, but he was slow to break in after we were out of graduate school—never landed anything more than a low-paying position assisting someone else, nothing more than a student's job, really. Eventually, he began driving a tour bus in San Diego, which not only provided a steady income but suited him so well that in time he was managing the line and began to refer to the position not as his job but as his calling. He said that San Diego was like a pretty blond boy without too many brains. He knew just how to play up its cultural assets while allowing its beauty to speak for itself. He said he liked being "at the controls." But he had to quit work over a year ago, and now his hands have become so shaky that he can no longer even manage a pen and paper.

When I get back to the apartment from my trip to the K mart, Mack asks me to take down a letter for him to an old high-school buddy back in Des Moines, a country-and-Western singer who has sent him a couple of her latest recordings. "*Whenever I met a new doctor or nurse*," he dictates, "*I always asked them whether they believed in miracles*."

Mack sits up a bit straighter and rearranges the pillows behind his back on the couch. "What did I just say?" he asks me.

" 'I always asked them whether they believed in miracles.' "

"Yes," he says, and continues. "*And if they said no, I told them I wanted to see someone else. I didn't want them treating me. Back then, I was hoping for a miracle, which seemed reasonable.* Do you think this is too detailed?" he asks me.



"No," I say. "I think it's fine."

"I don't want to depress her."

"Go on," I say.

"*But now I have lung cancer*," he continues. "*So now I need not one but two miracles. That doesn't seem as possible somehow.* Wait. Did you write 'possible' yet?"

"No," I say. " 'That doesn't seem as . . .' "

"Reasonable," he says. "Didn't I say 'reasonable' before?"

"Yes," I say. " 'That doesn't seem as reasonable somehow.' "

"Yes," he says. "How does that sound?"

"It sounds fine, Mack. It's not for publication, you know."

"It's not?" he says, feigning astonishment. "I thought it was: 'Letters of an AIDS Victim.' " He says this in a spooky voice and makes his bug-eyes. Since his head is a perfect skull, the whole effect really is a little spooky.

"What else?" I say.

"*Thank you for your nice letter*," he continues, "*and for the tapes*." He begins coughing—a horrible, rasping seizure. Mack has told me that he has lost all fear; he said he realized this a few weeks ago, on the skyride at the zoo. But when the coughing sets in, when it seems that it may never stop, I think I see terror in his eyes: he begins tapping his breastbone with the fingers of one hand, as if he's trying to wake up his lungs, prod them to do their appointed work. Finally he does stop, and he sits for a moment in silence, in thought. Then he dictates: "*It makes me very happy that you are so successful*."

AT Mrs. Mears' craft sale, in the alley behind her cottage, she has set up several card tables: Scores of plastic dolls with hand-knitted dresses, shoes, and hats. Handmade doll furniture. Christmas ornaments. A whole box of knitted bonnets and scarves for dolls. Also, some baked goods. Now, while Lester holds Eberhardt, Mrs. Mears, wearing a large straw hat and sunglasses, outfits the dachshund in one of the bonnets and scarves. "There now," she says. "Have you ever seen anything so *precious*? I'm going to get my camera."

Mack sits in a folding chair by one of the tables; next to him sits Mr. Mears, also in a folding chair. The two men look very much alike, though Mr. Mears is not nearly as emaciated as Mack. And of course Mr. Mears is eighty-seven. Mack, on the calendar, is not quite forty. I notice that Mack's shoelaces are untied, and I kneel to tie them. "The thing about reincarnation," he's saying to Mr. Mears, "is that you can't remember anything and you don't recognize anybody."

"Consciously," says Lester, butting in. "*Sub*consciously you do."

"Subconsciously," says Mack. "What's the point? I'm not the least bit interested."

Mr. Mears removes his houndstooth-check cap and scratches his bald, freckled head. "I'm not, either," he says with great resignation.

As Mrs. Mears returns with the camera, she says, "Put him over there, in Mack's lap."

"It doesn't matter whether you're interested or not," says Lester, dropping Eberhardt into Mack's lap.

"Give me good old-fashioned Heaven and Hell," says Mr. Mears.

"I should think you would've had enough of that already," says Lester.

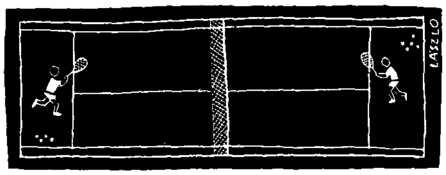
Mr. Mears gives Lester a suspicious look, then gazes down at his own knees. "Then give me nothing," he says finally.

I stand up and step aside just in time for Mrs. Mears to snap the picture. "Did you ever *see* anything?" she says, all sunshades and yellow teeth, but as she heads back toward the cottage door, her face is immediately serious. She takes me by the arm and pulls me along, reaching for something from one of the tables—a doll's bed, white with a red strawberry painted on the headboard. "For your little girl," she says aloud. Then she whispers, "You better get him out of the sun, don't you think? He doesn't look so good."

But when I turn again, I see that Lester is already helping Mack out of his chair. "Here—let me," says Mrs. Mears, reaching an arm toward them, and she escorts Mack up the narrow, shaded sidewalk, back toward the apartment building. Lester moves alongside me and says, "Dan, do you think you could give Mack his bath this afternoon? I'd like to take Eberhardt for a walk."

"Of course," I say, quickly.

But a while later—after I have drawn the bath, after I've taken a large beach towel out of the linen closet, refolded it into a thick square, and put it into the water to serve as a cushion for Mack to sit on in the tub; when I'm holding the towel under, against some resistance, waiting for the bubbles to stop surfacing, and there's something horrible about it, like drowning a small animal—I think Lester has tricked me into this task of bathing Mack, and the saliva in my mouth suddenly seems to taste of Scotch, which I have not actually tasted in nine years.



There is no time to consider any of this, however, for in a moment Mack enters the bathroom, trailing his tubes behind him, and says, "Are you ready for my Auschwitz look?"

"I've seen it before," I say.

And it's true. I have, a few times, helping him with his shirt and pants after Lester has bathed him and gotten him into his underwear. But that doesn't feel like preparation. The sight

IMMATURE TECHNOLOGY

There is machinery
behind the money: the control shack
beside the train

tracks, the TV screen
flashing blue on nothing, oil,
tar, sulfur, struts, bastard

amber incandescent light
on concrete, gas tanks, sub-
structures, lug nuts, in-

dustrial gravel.
The straightened river-
banks pucker

with bubbles sucking
at the signs that line them: Gas
Pipeline Crossing, Do Not Anchor,

Do Not Dredge. It is high time
to lie in the artificial heat
of a house and run our hands over each other's skin

and run warm water in white porcelain
and clean the soot off the storm
windows. And when we're done we'll take a train

to the city, flying under the Low
Catenary Clearance, by-
passing the signs of Prudential,

First Fidelity, Mutual
Benefit Life, running in a straight line
by the sun that drifts

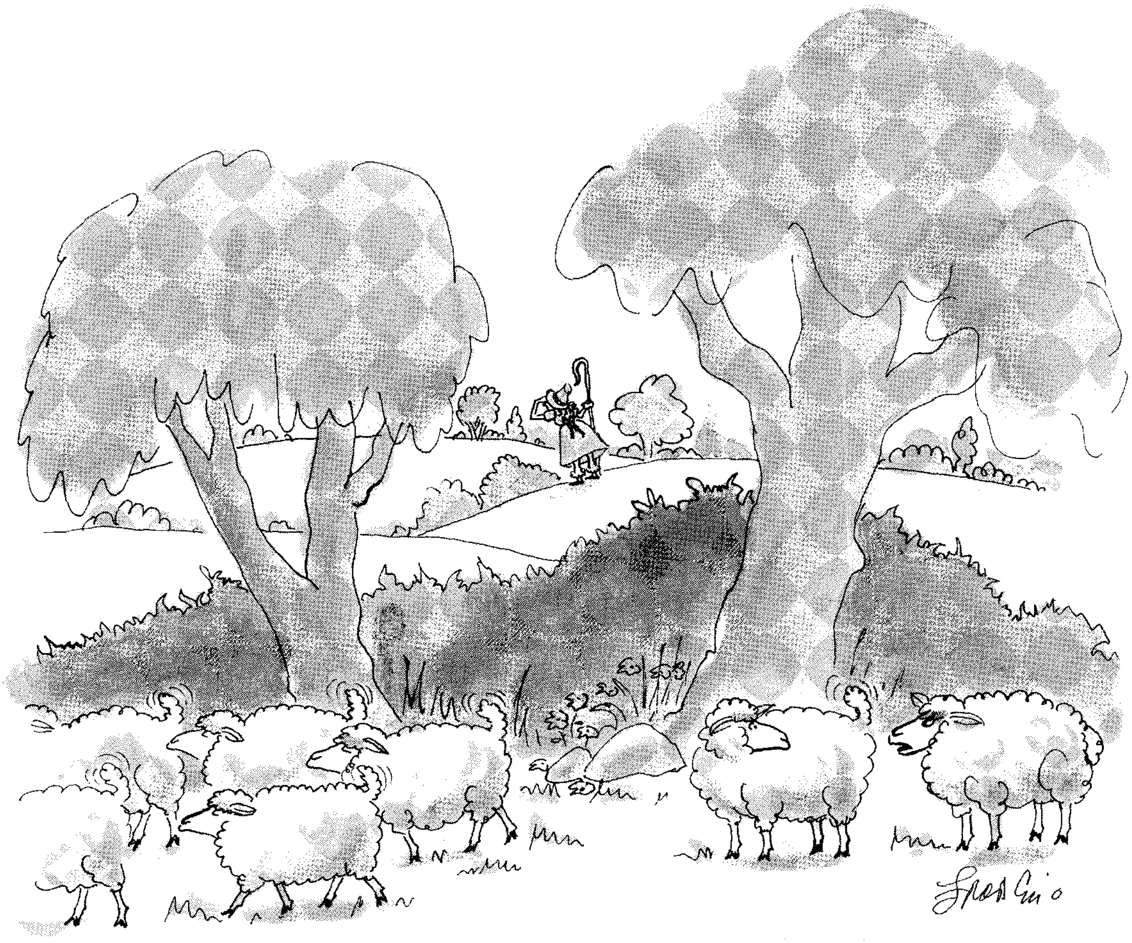
like a helium balloon across the ceiling.
In a matter of minutes, one wilderness
replaces another and the train

sighs in under the words
of dead tribes: Erie
Lackawanna.

—CAROLINE FRASER

• •

of him naked is like a powerful, scary drug: you forget between trips, remember only when you start to come on to it again. I help him off with his clothes now and guide him into the tub and gently onto the underwater towel. "That's nice," he says, and I begin soaping the hollows of his shoulders, the hard washboard of his back. This is not human skin as we know it but something already dead—so dry, dense, and pleasantly brown as to appear manufactured. I soap the cage of his chest, his stomach—the hard, depressed abdomen of a greyhound—the steep vaults of his armpits, his legs, his feet. Oddly, his hands and feet appear almost normal, even a bit swollen. At last I give him the slippery bar of soap. "Your turn," I say.



"I'll come home, but I'll be damned if I'll wag my tail behind me."

• •

"My poor cock," he says as he begins to wash himself.

When he's done, I rinse him all over with the hand spray attached to the faucet. I lather the feathery white wisps of his hair—we have to remove the plastic oxygen tubes for this—then rinse again. "You know," he says, "I know it's irrational, but I feel kind of turned off to sex."

The apparent understatement of this almost takes my breath away. "There are more important things," I say.

"Oh, I know," he says. "I just hope Lester's not too unhappy." Then, after a moment, he says, "You know, Dan, it's only logical that they've all given up on me. And I've accepted it mostly. But I still have days when I think I should at least be given a chance."

"You can ask them for anything you want, Mack," I say.

"I know," he says. "That's the problem—there's nothing to ask for."

"Mack," I say. "I think I understand what you meant this morning about the tree pruning and the credit cards."

"You do?"

"Well, I think your mind just shifted into metaphor. Because I can see that pruning trees is like imposing a limit—just like the limit on the credit cards."

Mack is silent, pondering this. "Maybe," he says at last, hesitantly—a moment of disappointment for us both.

I get him out and hooked up to the oxygen again, dry him off, and begin dressing him. Somehow I get the oxygen tubes trapped between his legs and the elastic waistband of his sweatpants—no big deal, but I suddenly feel panicky—and I have to take them off his face again to set them to rights. After he's safely back on the living-room couch and I've returned to the bathroom, I hear him: low, painful-sounding groans. "Are you all right?" I call from the hallway.

"Oh, yes," he says, "I'm just moaning. It's one of the few pleasures I have left."

The bathtub is coated with a crust of dead skin, which I wash away with the sprayer. Then I find a screwdriver and go to work on the toilet seat. After I get the old one off, I need to scrub around the area where the plastic screws were. I've sprinkled Ajax all around the rim of the bowl and found the scrub brush when Lester appears at the bathroom door, back with Eberhardt from their walk. "Oh, Dan, really," he says. "You go too far. Down on your knees now, scrubbing our toilet."

"Lester, leave me alone," I say.

"Well, it's true," he says. "You really do."

"Maybe I'm working out my survivor's guilt," I say, "if you don't mind."

"You mean because your best buddy's dying and you're not?"

"Yes," I say. "It's very common."

He parks one hip on the edge of the

sink. And after a moment he says this: "Danny boy, if you feel guilty about surviving . . . that's not irreversible, you know. I could fix that."

We are both stunned. He looks at me. In another moment, there are tears in his eyes. He quickly closes the bathroom door, moves to the tub and turns on the water, sits on the side, and bursts into sobs. "I'm sorry," he says. "I'm so sorry."

"Forget it," I say.

He begins to compose himself almost at once. "This is what Jane Alexander did when she played Eleanor Roosevelt," he says. "Do you remember? When she needed to cry she'd go in the bathroom and turn on the water, so nobody could hear her. Remember?"

IN the pickup, on the way to the hospital, Lester—in the middle, between Mack and me—says, "Maybe after they're down there you could doze off, but on the *way* down, they want you awake." He's explaining the bronchoscopy to me—the insertion of the tube down the windpipe—with which he is personally familiar: "They reach certain points on the way down where they have to ask you to swallow."

"*He's* not having the test, is he?" Mack says, looking confused.

"No, of course not," says Lester.

"Didn't you just say to him that he had to swallow?"

"I meant *anyone*, Mack," says Lester.

"Oh," says Mack. "Oh, yeah."

"The general 'you,' " Lester says to me. "He keeps forgetting little things like that."

Mack shakes his head, then points at his temple with one finger. "My mind," he says.

Mack is on tank oxygen now, which comes with a small caddy. I push the caddy, behind him, and Lester assists him along the short walk from the curb to the hospital's front door and the elevators. Nine years ago, it was Mack who drove *me* to a different wing of this same hospital—against my drunken, slobbery will—to dry out. And as I watch him struggle up the low inclined ramp toward the glass-and-steel doors, I recall the single irrefutable thing he said to me in the car on the way. "You stink," he said. "You've puked and probably pissed your pants and you *stink*," he said—my loyal, articulate, and best friend, saving my life, and causing me to cry like a baby.

Inside the clinic upstairs, the nurse, a sour young blond woman in a sky-blue uniform who looks terribly overworked, says to Mack, "You know better than to be late."

We are five minutes late to the second. Mack looks at her incredulously. He stands with one hand on the handle of the oxygen-tank caddy. He straightens up, perfectly erect—the indignant, shockingly skeletal posture of a man fasting to the death for some holy principle. He gives the nurse the bug-eyes, and says, "And you know better than to keep me waiting every time I come over here for some goddam procedure. But get over yourself: shit happens."

He turns and winks at me.

Though I've offered to return for them afterward, Lester has insisted on taking a taxi, so I will leave them here and drive back home, where again I'll try—successfully, this time—to explain to my wife how all this feels to me, and where, a few minutes later, I'll stand outside the door to my daughter's room, comforted by the music of her small high voice as she consoles her dolls.

Now the nurse gets Mack into a wheelchair and leaves us in the middle of the reception area; then, from the proper position at her desk, she calls Mack's name, and says he may proceed to the laboratory.

"Dan," Mack says, stretching his spotted, broomstick arms toward me. "Old pal. Do you remember the Christmas we drove out to Des Moines on the motorcycle?"

We did go to Des Moines together, one very snowy Christmas—but of course we didn't go on any motorcycle, not in December.

"We had fun," I say and put my arms around him, awkwardly, since he is sitting.

"Help me up," he whispers—confidentially—and I begin to lift him.

—DENNIS MCFARLAND

•

UH-HUH DEPARTMENT

[*From the Newark Star Ledger*]

The freeholders unanimously approved appropriating $600,000 to fund the project, voting to raise $570,000 of the cost through a bond ordinance. The money will be used to reinforce the building so it can be returned to use.

The 29-year-old structure—built to withstand a nuclear attack—has been vacant since 1982, when engineers found it to be in danger of collapse.

REFLECTIONS

BREAKING FAITH—I

IN 1945, the Preparatory Commission of the United Nations urged that in directing the new organization "the Secretary-General should take the necessary steps to ensure that no persons who have discredited themselves by their activities or connections with Fascism or Nazism shall be appointed to the Secretariat." In 1948, this provision was included, as a General Assembly directive, in the comprehensive regulations for the new international civil service issued by the first Secretary-General, Trygve Lie; and survived four years. In December, 1952, the stipulation disappeared, apparently without opposition from member governments, U.N. leaders and supporters, or the press. The erasure was, however, noted at the time by lawyers representing a group of U.N. employees dismissed without cause by Lie. The circumstance and its context are recorded, in the Brief on Behalf of Nineteen Applicants presented in the United Nations Administrative Tribunal in 1953. That brief is an essential document for any informed assessment of the history and present condition of the United Nations. The formative episode it recounts prepared the ground, more than any other single factor, for the later degradation of the office of United Nations Secretary-General.

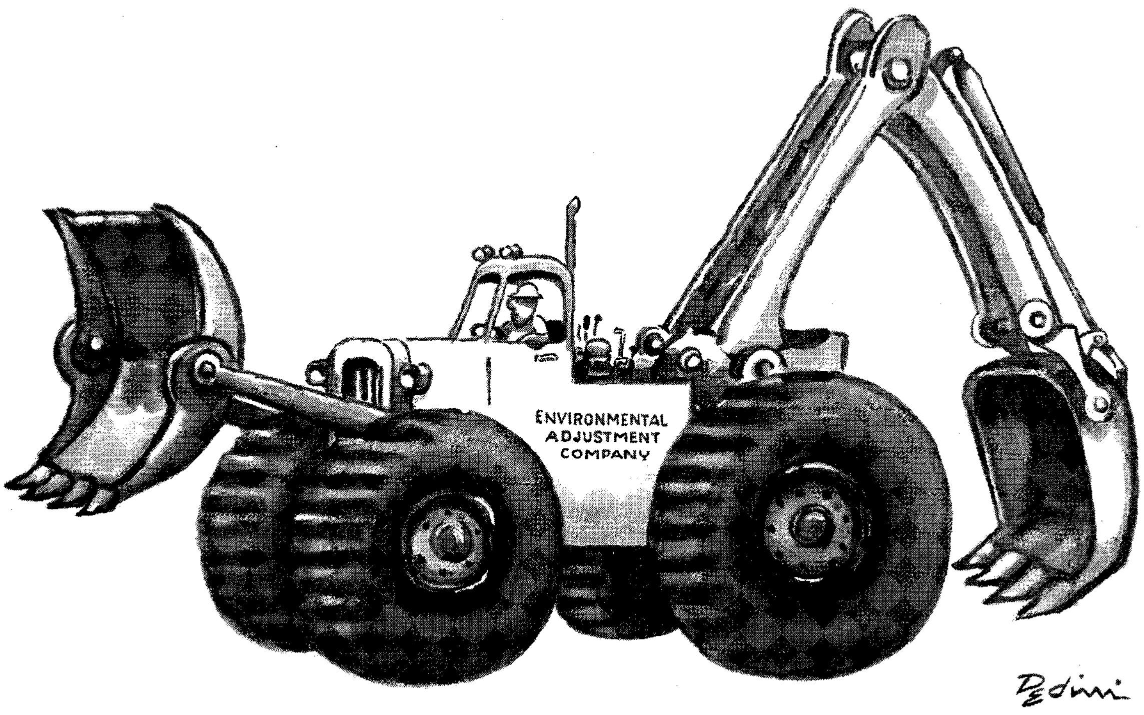
In 1949, four years after the United Nations' founding, Trygve Lie contracted a written secret agreement with the United States Department of State whereby, in violation of basic liberties and of the United Nations Charter, applicants for and incumbents in U.N. Secretariat positions were "screened," without their knowledge, by United States agents. Although directed in the first instance against American citizens—who, numbering about two thousand, then constituted approximately half of the U.N. headquarters personnel—the influence of this clandestine agreement extended to U.N. employees of other nationalities, and permeated U.N. specialized agencies abroad, such as UNESCO and the Food and Agriculture Organization. The policy confirmed in the agreement—a policy aimed not only at excluding convinced internationalists from the international civil service but at aligning that service with current and parochial attitudes in the United States—had been established well before its written formalization, with effects apparent to the staff. On March 11, 1947, at Lake Success, where the infant organization was provisionally installed, a mass meeting of U.N. employees confronting Lie had informed him, through a young Frenchman who was their spokesman, "There is a total lack of confidence and understanding between you and the whole staff." The following day, in a front-page account of the event, a New York *Times* U.N. correspondent, A. M. Rosenthal, reported, "They asked for permanent contracts to give them security. They sought a clear-cut policy on dismissals. They demanded a definite end to appointments and promotions through outside contacts with delegations and ambassadors." These calls for adherence by U.N. leaders to the sworn principles of United Nations service would be fruitlessly reiterated by staff representatives and internal management studies for the next forty years.

In an angry and characteristically emotional response, Lie availed himself, in turn, of an argument that would thenceforth be used by U.N. senior officials to deflect inquiry into malfunction and malpractice at the organization: "Everything you say will be used against this organization by the enemies of the United Nations." An insistence that the United Nations should be shielded from realistic appraisal and that its significant errors should be denied or dissembled even within the institution itself thus took hold in the U.N.'s earliest years, precluding any candid exchange with the public, and sparing the organization the need to demonstrate resolve and utility before the world. Support of the United Nations accordingly came to be understood as a sentimental acceptance and propagation of the organization's self-proclaimed image, without informed challenge to its deep realities; and the interest of inquiring minds was consequently withdrawn.

In 1949, the year of

Nothing much. Standing in tears amid the alien corn.

Ruth and Her New Cordless Telephone



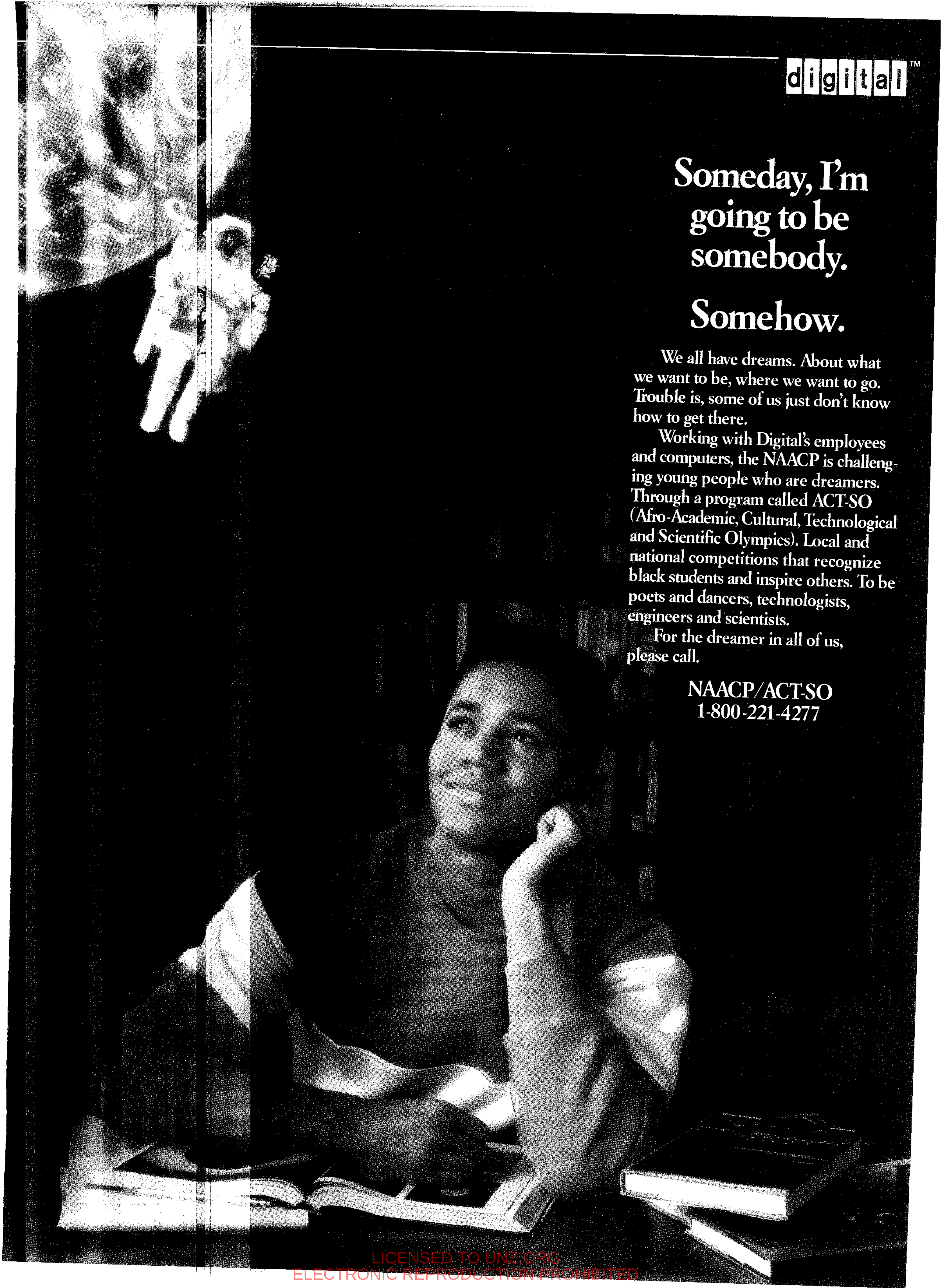
Lie's secret agreement with the State Department, an internal investigation was conducted into charges of anti-Semitism within the Secretariat administration. While establishing—as Lie reported in January, 1950—no evidence of "an overt act of anti-Semitism," the U.N. board of inquiry found that "there were, however, administrative actions of an irregular character which had the appearance of unfair discrimination against the complainants and certainly caused the complainants to suffer unjustly." Five dismissed employees were reinstated, and others were reassured of their positions. Shortly afterward, in March, 1950, some of these persons were again dismissed, on the fictitious ground that their posts had been abolished. And, again, these actions arose from Lie's covert subservience to United States political pressures.

That the international civil service should be denied independence at the outset, and by the intervention of its most powerful democratic member state, was a conclusive defeat for any practical realization of the United Nations concept. The fateful experience of the League of Nations had demonstrated that the enduring worth of an instrument for, in the words of the U.N. Charter, "the prevention and removal of threats to the peace" would require an objective and highly professional civil service, defended by a vigorous Secretary-General whose own initiatives were constitutionally authorized—a service nurturing, as its main support, the wide public attention and good will extended to the United Nations in its earliest years. An entitlement to public trust, through demonstrated and sustained moral authority, would, in turn, provide such a Secretariat with the stature and cumulative power to resist governmental pressures and to exert a favorable and intelligent influence in world affairs. As Evan Luard, a historian of the United Nations, has written, the new organization "would clearly be able to secure law and order only by maximizing intangible influence of this kind."

In 1919, at the inception of the League of Nations, John Maynard Keynes had acknowledged the validity of this same belief: "The League will operate, say its supporters, by its influence on the public opinion of the world . . . Let us pray that this be so." Keynes went on, however, to warn against a merely sentimental application of this hope, advising that strict and energetic vigilance would be needed to activate the beneficent provisions of the League's constitution, lest the League "become an unequalled instrument for obstruction and delay . . . an unwieldy polyglot debating society in which the greatest resolution and the best management may fail altogether to bring issues to a head against an opposition in favour of the *status quo*."

The positive view of the Secretariat's potential, framed in the aftermath of the League's failure and incorporated into the U.N. Charter, was briefly borne out during the years of Dag Hammarskjöld's best diplomatic initiatives, when the public interest aroused around the world by his active endeavors immeasurably strengthened the Secretary-General's hand in his dealings with governments and played its part in his unanimous reëlection to a second term. Hammarskjöld's political interventions were, however, individual in conception, and ceased with his death—as did the popular attention they had engendered. Without a resourceful leader, and without the complementary support of a skilled and disinterested civil service, the United Nations could only, as its founders foresaw, become a hugely magnified forum for governmental tactics and transformations, and for national propaganda, before which the world's public would remain unrepresented and largely helpless. The Secretariat and its chief officer were charged with representing, through the defense of principle, the public interest.

In seeking to guarantee "the highest standards of efficiency, competence, and integrity" in the new international staff—with only a subsidiary provision for "due regard" to its geographical composition—and in prohibiting improper dealings between governments and the Secretariat which might modify or thwart that objective, the drafters of Articles 100 and 101 of the Charter were doubtless aware that the Soviet bloc in particular among the organization's members would, while reluctantly, and only nominally, subscribing to such principles, place its chosen and supervised candidates throughout the Secretariat. At the outset, however, Soviet employees were few. And it was reasonable to suppose that adherence to the relevant Charter undertakings by



Someday, I'm going to be somebody.

Somehow.

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"Western bloc" governments, which constituted the overwhelming majority of the fifty-one original member nations, would outweigh and eventually isolate violations. As Joseph P. Lash would observe, writing in the (then liberal) New York *Post* on December 12, 1952:

> While it is conceded the Soviet bloc maintains an ironclad control over their nationals on the UN staff, no one believes Soviet practices should necessarily become the models of international conduct.

At the U.N.'s founding, good faith with the Charter on the part of most members was assumed in respect to this fundamental issue of staff independence. And when the question was raised of an employee's possible conflict with the special interests of his government, it was pointed out that the experience of the League of Nations demonstrated that there was no practical difficulty in this matter except in the case of Fascist states.

That presumed good faith was promptly breached with the installation, by the great powers, of chosen national candidates as immediate deputies to the Secretary-General—a violation committed with the ill-omened acquiescence of Trygve Lie. The establishment of an independent international civil service was still, however, envisaged and indeed taken for granted by the organization's supporters. What was not foreseen was that the United States—then and long thereafter dominant in all United Nations affairs, and custodian not only of the organization's purse but of its best hopes—would at once conspire to abrogate this fundamental undertaking of the United Nations Charter. Still less, that the first Secretary-General would make himself a main party to that conspiracy.

THE secret agreement of 1949—the text of which is appended to the verbatim record of the Internal Security Subcommittee hearings of the United States Senate in the autumn of 1952—was implemented at the United Nations by Lie himself, a Norwegian, together with a group of his senior officers, most (but not all) of them Americans. It was the particular concern of Lie's Assistant Secretary-General for Administrative and Financial Services, Byron Price, who had been a wartime director of the United States Office of Censorship and a postwar executive in the American film industry. As the secret agent of the United States government within the United Nations leadership, Price devised and controlled the U.N.'s administrative policies throughout the organization's formative years. Although his name scarcely appears in U.N. studies and memoirs of the period, the significant power over the Secretariat was in his hands.

Trygve Lie, who had served as Foreign Minister with the Norwegian government-in-exile in London during the Second World War, had been elected Secretary-General after other candidates foundered on disagreements between the Western and Eastern blocs—which is to say, between the governments of the United States and the Soviet Union. In his later memoirs, Lie would describe his consternation at being selected for such an office:

> I had been nothing less than catapulted into the Secretary-Generalship of this new international organization. . . . It was a challenge beyond my wildest dreams; but it was a nightmare as well. I hardly dared to think of the days ahead. Instead, I asked myself again and again, Why had this awesome task fallen to a labor lawyer from Norway?

Crude without forthrightness, devious without astuteness, Lie was above all deficient in ethical perception. The choice of such a figure to inaugurate the office of United Nations Secretary-General in itself expressed the shallow intentions of the great powers in regard to the new organization.

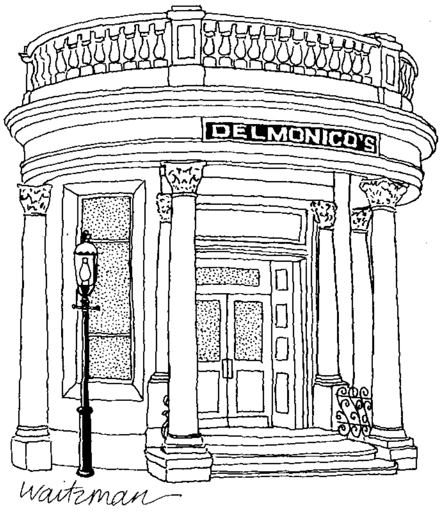
Under a "cover plan"—so characterized by State Department witnesses before the Internal Security Subcommittee, chaired by Senator Pat McCarran—a show of propriety was maintained in official correspondence between the United States mission and the United Nations administration, while American directives for dismissals of U.N. personnel were presented through "informal, confidential, word-of-mouth channels." The name of the designated victim, according to Byron Price's account, was accompanied only by "oral evaluation, which consisted many times of a single word, such as 'reject,' 'questionable,' or 'incomplete.' " In a memorandum of December 23, 1952, to the State Department, arising from the McCarran Subcommittee hearings, Price stated that "adverse evaluations, when received, have been wholly unaccompanied by security evidence or information on which the evaluations were based." In the same vein, John D. Hickerson, Assistant Secretary of State for United Nations Affairs, and negotiator and supervisor of the secret agreement, informed the McCarran Subcommittee:

> It is true that United Nations officials expressed the wish from time to time that they could have detailed information or evidence. However, to my knowledge, there was never at any time a statement from the Secretary-General that the secret procedure was unsatisfactory in the sense that he would not act on the basis of the comments being supplied and that these comments were useful only as a basis for further investigation. If there had been, we would have taken steps to try to work out a new procedure.

Hickerson had been a United States adviser at the Dumbarton Oaks preliminary conference on the United Nations, in 1944; and, in 1945, at the organizing conference in San Francisco, where the Charter principles were framed and confirmed.

It was the apparent hope of State Department officers, in recounting their illicit dealings with the United Nations administration, to demonstrate to the McCarthyist faction the Department's determination to frustrate the internationalist undertakings of the Charter. The desire of the inquisitors, in turn, was to show that the clandestine arrangements between the United States authorities and the U.N. Secretary-General did not go far enough.

Under the secret agreement, at least forty United Nations employees of United States nationality were dismissed, with damaging publicity, from 1951 to 1953, all of them having, as far as I can determine, superior efficiency ratings at the U.N.; and none of them being charged with an offense. Col-



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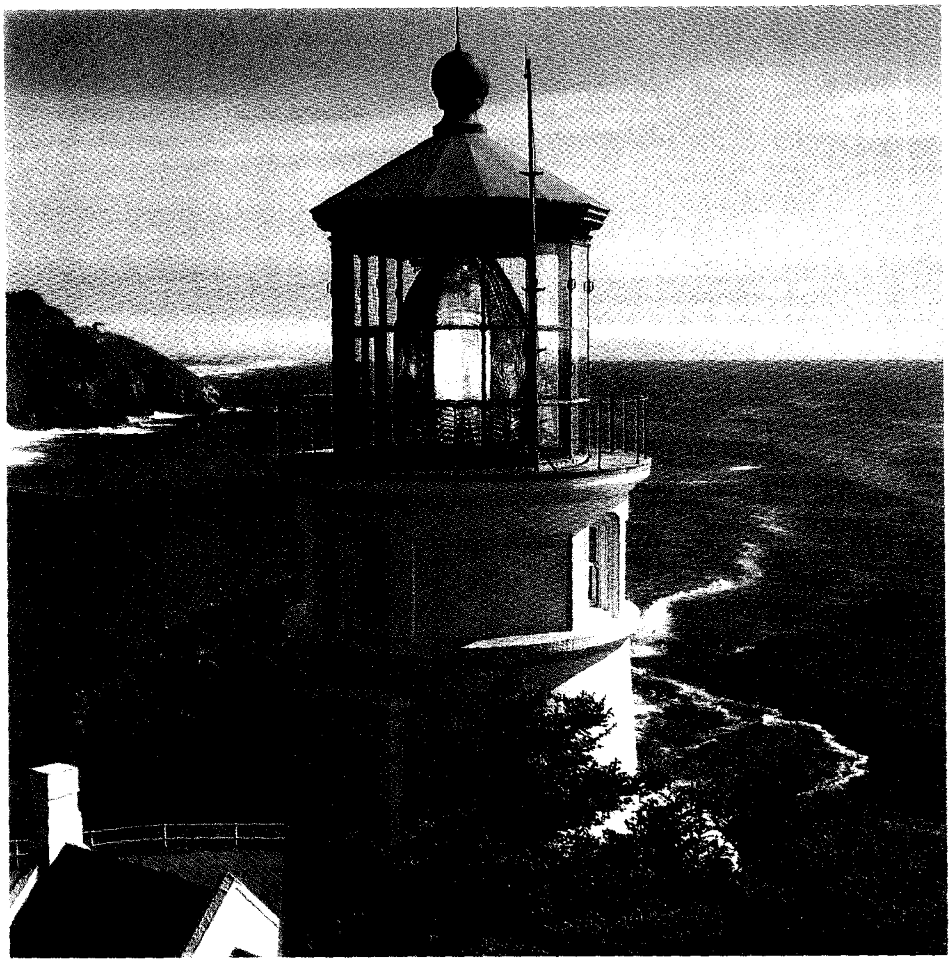
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leagues and staff representatives who came to their defense found their own United Nations employment terminated or conclusively blighted in consequence. Prolonged suspension of contractual security by Lie and Price left many of the dismissed without possibility of redress. Those whose contracts had been confirmed before that hiatus, however, eventually received substantial compensation from the Administrative Tribunal, the appellate instrument of the United Nations system itself, meeting abroad and internationally composed of distinguished independent jurists. The organs of the United Nations thus showed themselves in open conflict on this basic issue.

In 1953, American anger over the compensation awarded by the Administrative Tribunal to eleven former U.N. employees precipitated referral of the matter, by the U.N. General Assembly, to the International Court of Justice, at The Hague, for an "advisory opinion" as to the necessity of making the designated payments. Recipients of the awards were meanwhile vindictively recalled before the Internal Security Subcommittee, the record of their interrogation being made public at length in *U. S. News & World Report* of October 16, 1953. The World Court, in an opinion delivered in 1954, upheld the ruling of the Administrative Tribunal. The payments were made only in the following year.

Briefs attempting to justify these and similar dismissals before the Tribunal had been drawn up at the Secretariat under the direction of the United Nations chief legal officer, Abraham Feller, an American. Hampered by the absence of reason and due process in his own and the Secretary-General's actions, Feller had also labored under the necessity of concealing the real motives for the terminations and their instigation by the government of the United States. The case presented on the Secretary-General's behalf—which seeks to justify arbitrary actions by the Secretary-General against his staff—is often grotesquely inappropriate to a declared center of legal standards (as exemplified in the administration's stated claim that "the question of the motive for a failure to give a new contract is legally immaterial, even if there were in fact an improper motive"). The appellants themselves were represented by a succession of distinguished jurists, who included Telford Taylor, Frank Donner, and the young Leonard Boudin.

Looking back at these events, Boudin said recently:

> The U.N. aspect of the McCarthy era was as irrational as, for example, the denial of passports for political reasons. Neither had even the surface justification of the irrational and unconstitutional security-clearance system for U.S. government employment. It was both ludicrous and immoral for an international organization to enter into a secret agreement with a national government to deny international employment to United States citizens because of their constitutionally protected right of association.
>
> The lengths to which the U.S. government went regarding the staff members were illustrated by its resistance to paying the damage awards and by the fruitless referral to the International Court of Justice; and by similar U.S. actions in F.A.O. and UNESCO.
>
> The staff officials involved, from all these agencies, were the best international civil servants, and their removal represented a permanent loss to the public—just as the purge of distinguished teachers [in the early nineteen-fifties] from the New York City schools constituted a lasting deprivation for our children. The dismissed U.N. officials, after suffering obloquy and economic loss, eventually advanced in other fields. One had to meet and know them to be moved by their nobility of character and their courage under the extraordinary attack by their United Nations employer and by a series of U.S. government institutions operating in tandem or unison. In many ways, they found their equal only in the tribunal of international jurists—the U.N.'s Administrative Tribunal, then headed by Mme Suzanne Bastid.

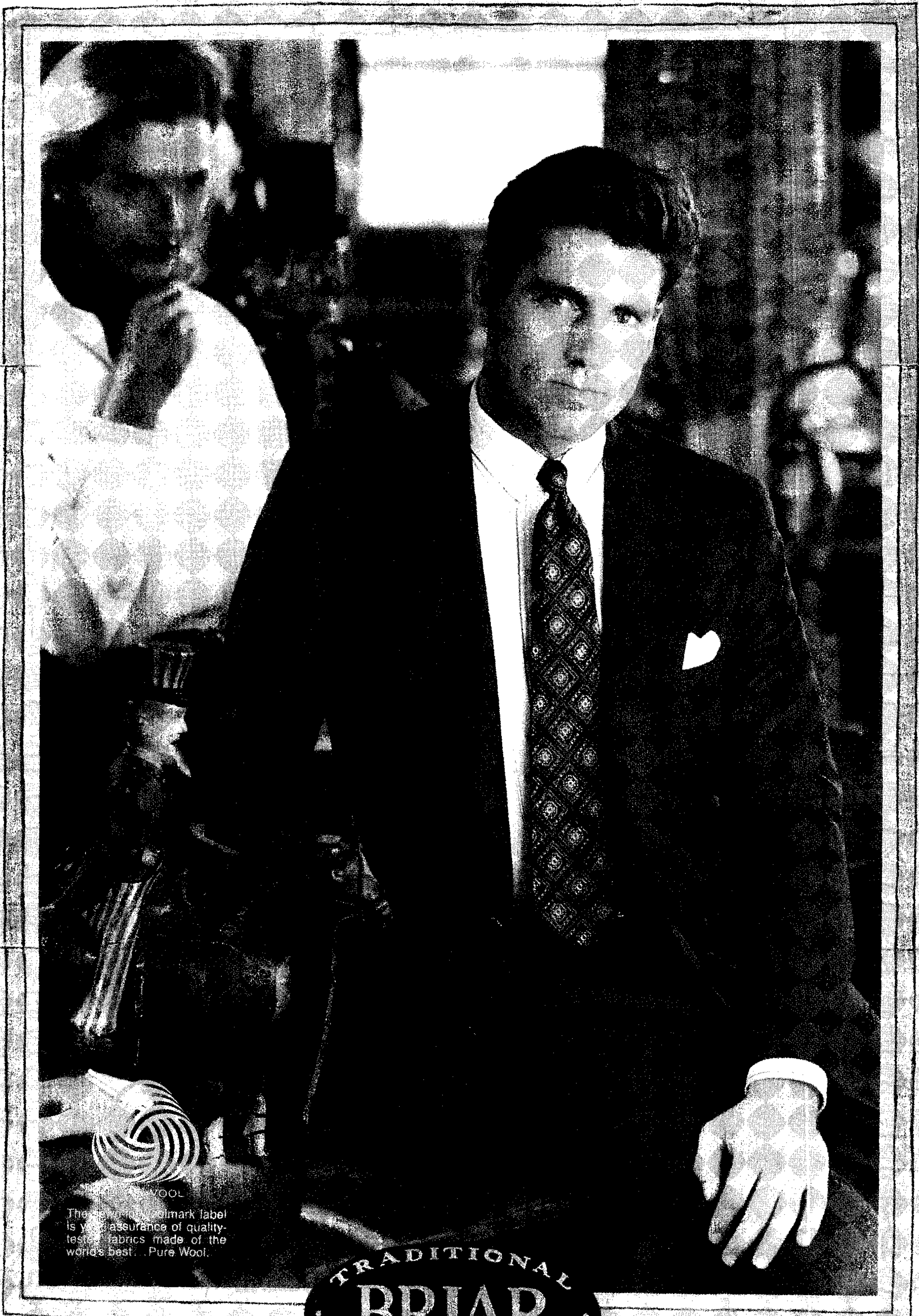
The number of international employees who, in a steady draining, left the United Nations system during its first decade because of intimidation, indignation, or disillusion may be estimated at several hundred. Some were encouraged to resign with special payments; sixty others were removed as part of an "efficiency survey," carried out in 1952, whose records were immediately destroyed.

Also in 1952, a panel of three jurists appointed by Trygve Lie to advise him on the "loyalty" question pleaded, as justification for the Secretary-General's departures from his Charter obligations, the special requirements of "the host country." The composition and findings of this panel did little to restore the confidence of the Secretariat.

In the prevailing political climate of the country, the exposure in the McCarran Subcommittee's 1952 hearings of Lie's clandestine arrangements with the United States government aroused almost no press attention or audible public indignation. Only a handful of embattled civil libertarians and journalists took note of the fatal significance of the events—among them Leon Edel, then writing in the *Daily Compass*. Otherwise, outrage was scarce in the American press, and citizens were not encouraged to understand what they had lost. In Europe, however, prominent newspapers called on Western leaders to defend the Charter principles—an official intervention made drastically unlikely by postwar conditions of European economic and strategic dependence on the United States. (In November, 1952, certain British and Canadian officials of the United Nations Secretariat called privately on Anthony Eden—then, as Britain's Foreign Secretary, attending the U.N. General Assembly—to urge his defense of the international civil service. Eden told them he was unaware of any violation. Since, in 1945, Eden himself had briefly hoped for the Secretary-Generalship, this incident may possibly indicate the course he would have followed in office. Discussing, in his memoirs, those November days at the U.N., Eden makes no mention of events, traumatic for the United Nations, that took place immediately after his arrival.) Writing in *Le Monde* on November 22, 1952, Maurice Duverger proposed the removal of the United Nations from the United States, pointing out that, had an analogous collaboration been revealed between the Secretary-General and the Soviet Union, it would have generated an outcry across America.

The Soviet bloc, which, for its part, had adopted a boycott of Lie over United Nations involvement in the Korean War—and which had no stake whatever in the independence of the U.N. Secretariat—appeared to watch this episode of Western folly with sardonic unsurprise.

Unnerved by the public illumination of his covert policies, yet ever more acquiescent to McCarthyist demands, Lie was obliged, on November 10, 1952, to offer his resignation to the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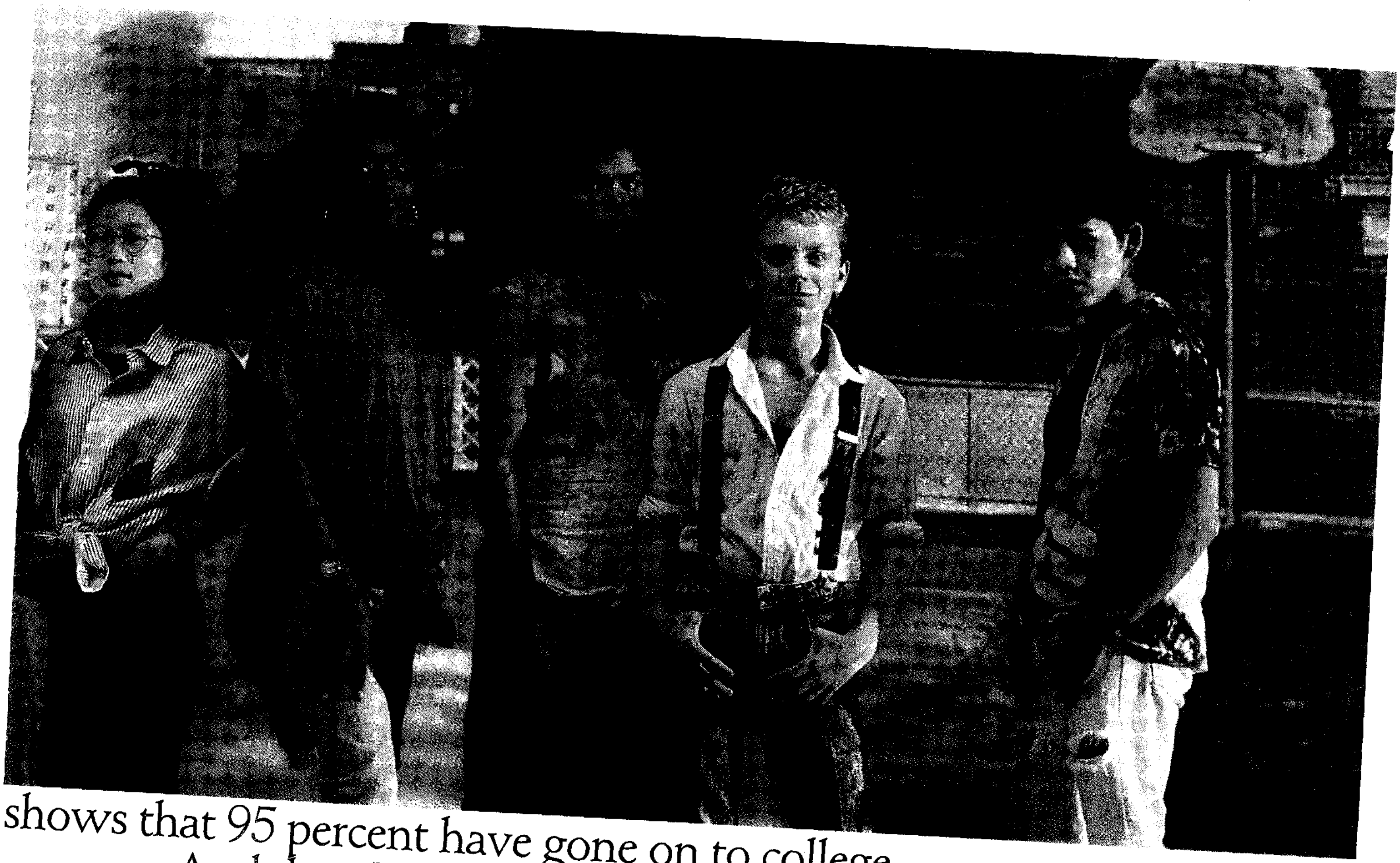

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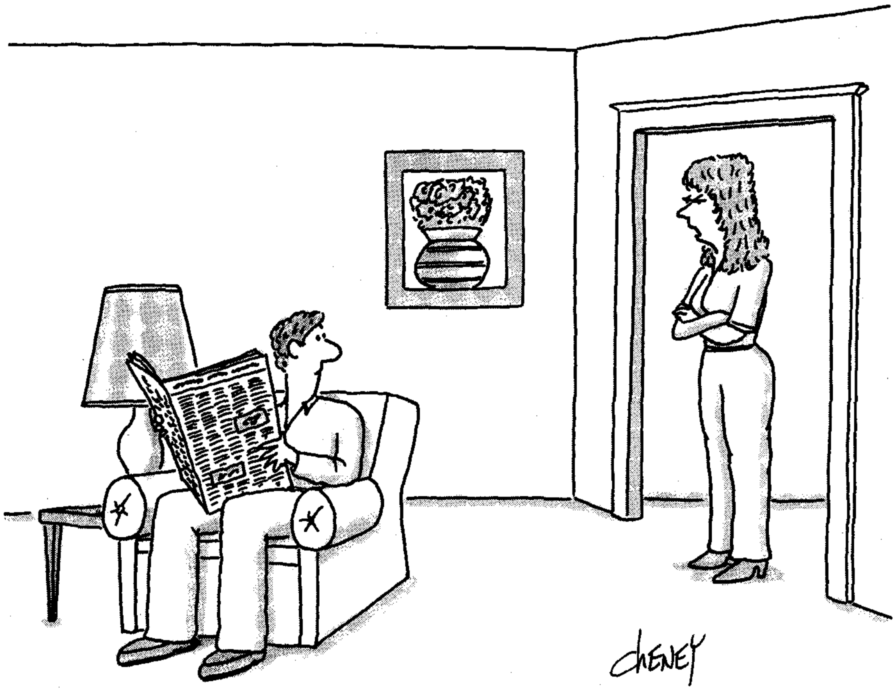

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General Assembly. Three days later, Abraham Feller, Lie's legal officer and close associate, committed suicide at the age of forty-seven, driven—as both his widow and Trygve Lie publicly stated at the time—by the same events.

Speaking to the American Philosophical Society on the evening of Feller's death, Ralph Bunche, then principal director for trusteeship at the U.N. Secretariat, made what appears to have been his only public criticism of "American pressures on the United Nations." (In later years, Bunche stated privately that pressure on his own position from the investigators had deterred him from taking a stand against the McCarthyist persecutions.) Shaken by Feller's death, Trygve Lie himself briefly spoke out in the same vein—an extravagance for which he soon apologized. Less than a month earlier, however, the Secretary-General's legal representative at the McCarran hearings, Oscar Schachter—a senior legal officer of the Secretariat—had fervently thanked the subcommittee for its "spirit of complete fairness," adding, "I should like the record to show that in no case did the Secretary-General interpose any objection to a question presented . . . to any witness in the United Nations."

In 1987, in his book "The Eighth Case: Troubled Times at the United Nations," describing the experience of McCarthyism at UNESCO, Julian Behrstock, a former official there, recounted a discussion with Oscar Schachter more than thirty years after these events: "In our interview he characterized Lie as 'craven'—but he apparently shared the Secretary-General's position as to the need to propitiate the American investigators."

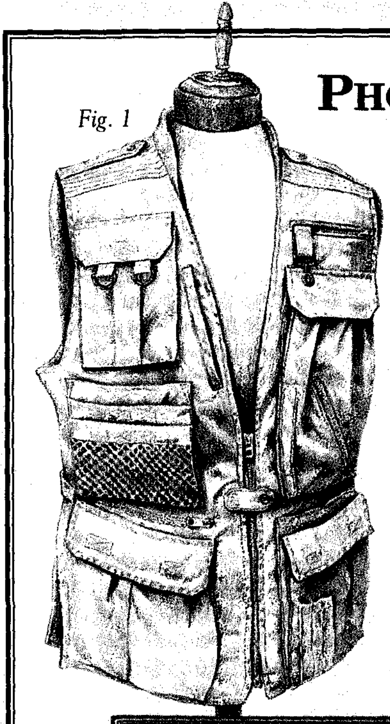
In a letter regarding Feller's death published in the *Times* on November 16, 1952, Telford Taylor went to the heart of the matter, asking, "What voice has been raised . . . to point out that the notion of political conformity within this staff can, and surely will, be applied to the grave disadvantage of the democratic cause? . . . There has been, so far as I know, no official comment to help set the matter straight."

Those of Lie's senior colleagues who were not his accomplices in the secret agreement maintained public silence throughout those crucial years. Among the heads of department, Hugh Keenleyside, a Canadian in charge of the Technical Assistance Administration, came forward within the Secretariat to defend his staff. Many criticized Lie's actions behind their hands, aware that audibility had its price. So far as I can discover, no one who openly condemned the conduct of the administration in this episode subsequently prospered in the organization. Others, who would, like Lie himself, later speak and write of "the witch-hunt," deplored, during the events themselves, the staff opposition to Lie's illegalities.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to find in the published literature concerning the United Nations any discussion of the secret agreement of 1949. The tendency seems, rather, to invert Lie's actual role in the McCarthy era. In his autobiography, "A Life in Peace and War," Brian Urquhart—for many years a leading spokesman for the Secretariat—touches briefly on the era of McCarthyism at the United Nations. Urquhart gives his view that "Lie tried to defend his American staff by coöperating with the American authorities in investigations to clear those who were under suspicion." No such picture emerges from the massive documentation of this issue, which overwhelmingly confirms that—as stated in the Brief on Behalf of Nineteen Applicants—"the Secretary-General of the United Nations not only has been subjected to these effective [American] pressures, but indeed has initiated, cultivated, and sought them out." The records of the McCarran Subcommittee hearings for 1952 and 1953 make equally clear that those investigations, like other inquisitions of the period, were aimed not at clearance but at victimization. Concealing its collusion with the United States authorities and heedless of the moral and statutory rebuke of the U.N.'s own tribunal, the United Nations administration conducted and expressed itself throughout those years as the implacable adversary of its own staff—initiating a schism that would be destructively perpetuated throughout the organization's subsequent story. For a young person such as myself, arriving in America at this time and eagerly enlisting in the United Nations' service—where I would remain, in a junior position, until 1961—these events marked an epoch. The mood of grim occasion in which they occurred was unforgettable; and Trygve Lie himself spoke of it as "the atmosphere of Greek tragedy."

In 1953, a prominent American appellant to the Administrative Tribunal, Jack Sargent Harris, was awarded compensation of forty thousand dollars with respect to his dismissal by Trygve Lie—in view, as the Tribunal stated, of his "outstanding professional competence" and "the very limited and specialized nature of his profession as anthropologist and African specialist whereby the opportunities of further employment are rare" and "the fact that he joined the United Nations at the special request of Mr. Ralph Bunche, Director of the Trusteeship Division, thereby terminating his previous career." (Seven years later, as the United Nations embarked on its mission in the Congo virtually without specialized personnel, Dag Hammarskjöld would concede that "the Secretariat . . . does not dispose of a sufficient number of highly qualified senior officials.") Harris's career as an anthropologist was completely destroyed by this episode, which—in the frenzy of the times—left him no possibility of governmental or academic employment. Rebuilding his life, he eventually prospered as an industrialist. In 1989, he related, for this account, his experience in those years at the United Nations:

> In 1946, I was invited by Dr. Ralph Bunche to join him at the Department of Trusteeship at the United Nations. At the time I was an anthropologist on the faculty of the University of Chicago. Bunche said that he wanted me because of my work in Africa, and especially in West Africa; and, in February, 1947, I was appointed to the U.N.'s Division of Trusteeship, of which Bunche was Director. I was subsequently awarded tenure there as a Senior Officer. My work at the U.N. was concerned with the improvement of social and economic conditions of peoples in the African Trust Territories, and with the attempt to establish viable bases for their political development toward independence. It was an exciting period at the United Nations. In the Secretariat we felt that we constituted a truly international civil service. The work was challenging, demanding, stimulating, and we believed that we were contributing to the noble principles of the U.N. Charter.
>
> That period ended abruptly. Many of the American citizens employed by the U.N. were called to testify before grand juries and congressional subcommittees on the broad question of loyalty to the United States government—in other words, we fell victim to the witch-hunt during what is now known as "the McCarthy era." In December, 1952, I myself was dismissed from my United Nations post as a result of my appearances before the Senate subcommittee appointed to investigate the administration of the Internal Security Act. We were stunned to find that Trygve Lie not only refused to protect our status as international civil servants but actually pandered to the F.B.I., bowed to the hysteria of the times in the United States, and participated in inflicting the indignities that we suffered. And what was our crime? We had invoked the protection of our Constitution against unlawful harassment. The Senate subcommittee attempted



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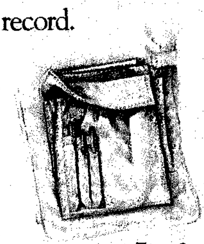

Fig. 2

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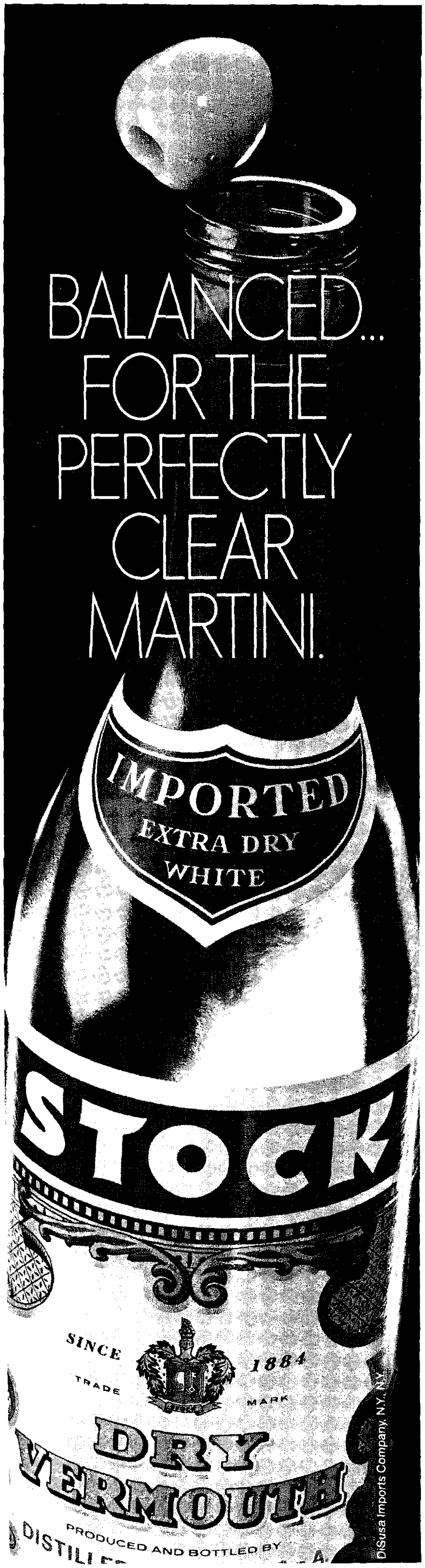
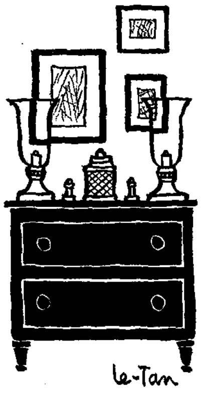


> to assume powers that rightly belonged to the courts, but we were denied the safeguards inherent in normal court procedure.
>
> Clearly, by his conduct in this affair, Trygve Lie compromised the integrity and independence of the international civil service.
>
> The consequences of our departure from the United Nations, I am told by former colleagues, were insidious and far-reaching. Motivation and spirit were gravely affected. Pressures of various countries on their nationals in the Secretariat became more insistent. A number of Secretariat staff withdrew or took early retirement rather than continue to work in a cynical and restrictive situation lacking much of its former meaning.

Lie remained in his post for more than four months after tendering his resignation. In the new year of 1953, he "welcomed," as he expressed it, the executive order of the departing President Truman by which, in complete violation of the stipulations of the U.N. Charter, an exhaustive official screening of all Americans in United Nations positions was instituted.

The uncontested establishment of this national clearance nullified the Charter concept of an independent and effective civil service, inflicting untold damage on the potential of the United Nations. Other member governments would thenceforth—at first by degrees, and subsequently in a flood—also install their nominees in virtually all significant, and in many insignificant, U.N. posts. Hundreds of meaningless and costly positions would be created throughout the leadership of the U.N. system for the sole purpose of accommodating national candidates—some of whom, devoid of qualifications, were unwanted in their homelands for political motives, while still others arrived trailing rumors of incompetence or scandal. The useful work of field missions would, on occasion, be similarly encumbered by such superfluous emissaries, dispatched to lucrative senior field assignments from a headquarters that had found their presence burdensome. In 1978, the fourth Secretary-General, Kurt Waldheim, would inform his unhappy staff that "the General Assembly has made it clear that the composition of the Secretariat with respect to the geographical distribution of the staff is the over-riding factor"—without reference to the contrary mandate of the Charter. By the nineteen-eighties, the *Times* would report the view of "one Western Ambassador" that "You try to get as many posts as possible for your own nationals. This is wrong, but everybody does it." And the salaries of senior members of the U.N. service would in a number of cases be supplemented, in another reversal of the Charter articles, by large subsidies from their respective governments (one official receiving, for instance, a U.N. salary of a hundred and twenty thousand dollars a year while accepting from her government an additional annual payment of eighty thousand dollars). Each ensuing violation has been condoned by successive Secretaries-General, whose sworn obligation and public claim it is to defend the Secretariat from just such interventions. ("This book is my religion," the fifth Secretary-General, Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, told the *Times* in 1982, pointing to the Charter.)

The provision, inaugurated by Trygve Lie, for "full field clearance" by United States agents of all American candidates for U.N. appointments was confirmed, with superficial adjustments, by Dag Hammarskjöld in the first year of his incumbency. With some procedural modification, it was to remain in force for over thirty years. In September, 1983, as the result of a sustained challenge to its legality by Dr. David Ozonoff, a candidate for employment at the United Nations World Health Organization, the clearance was ruled unconstitutional by a United States District Court judge. Dr. Ozonoff had been represented by Leonard Boudin. An appeal of the court's ruling by the United States government was disallowed in 1984. And in 1986, following the upholding of a subsequent legal challenge to the procedure, the national-security-clearance requirement for American applicants to United Nations positions was at last withdrawn. This victory was, significantly, the result of persistent defense of right by private citizens and their counsel, unassisted by the extensive legal apparatus incorporated in the United Nations. While the confirmation of fundamental principle was historic, and indispensable to the design of any future body that may replace the



present United Nations, its benefits could scarcely be felt in an institution now heavily staffed by the chosen candidates of one hundred and fifty-nine member governments.

Early in 1953, in pursuance of the new clearance procedure, a branch office of the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation was installed, with Lie's approval and with the blessing of the new United States representative at the U.N., Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr., in the United Nations headquarters building, for purposes of surveillance, interrogation, and fingerprinting of all Americans on the international staff. The F.B.I. agents remained in the Secretariat, on international territory, throughout the first year of Dag Hammarskjöld's incumbency, departing—as Hammarskjöld confirmed in 1954, in response to a reiterated staff inquiry—only on completion of their task. Again, no United Nations leader or supporter publicly contested the F.B.I. presence, or rose to the defense of a junior employee, of United States nationality, who, having challenged the propriety of these investigations on U.N. premises, was dismissed from her post by Hammarskjöld. As Conor Cruise O'Brien observed, in 1964, "On what might be called the McCarthy issue, Hammarskjöld bowed, more gracefully and inconspicuously than Trygve Lie, but bowed none the less, to prevailing American opinion."

The abhorrence felt by Secretariat employees for this new invasion of their rights was evidently incomprehensible to the United Nations administration and its legal officers. "What I could not get across to them," Oscar Schachter told Julian Behrstock in the nineteen-eighties, "is that the investigation was concerned only with loyalty and that they had nothing to fear in replying to these personal questions."

The United States, satisfied with its ascendancy, neither then nor later acknowledged its leading role in the destruction of the quality and impartiality of the United Nations Secretariat. Although the adverse consequences, as they began to appear throughout the entire framework of the United Nations, were bitterly deplored by American critics, no effort was made to trace their origins. As the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the United States Senate, J. William Ful-

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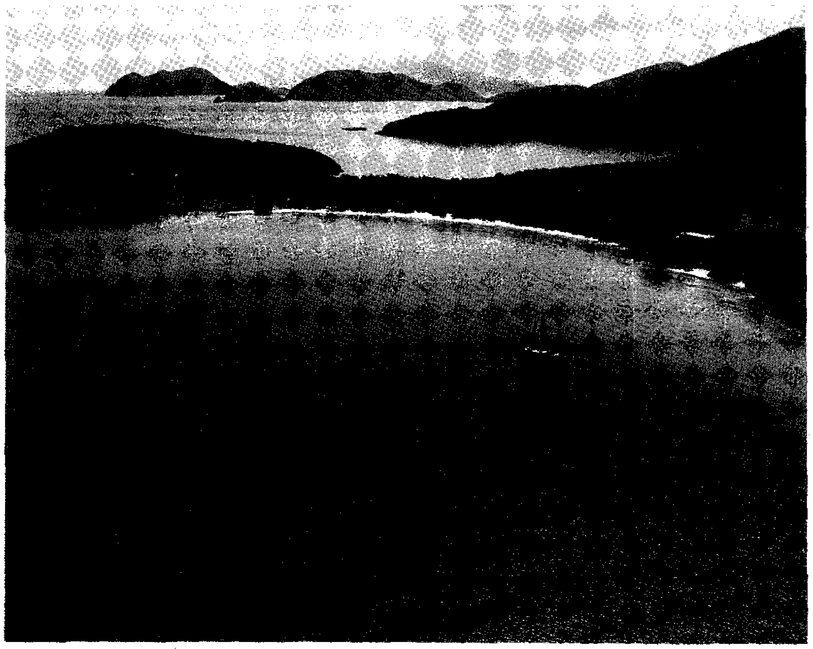

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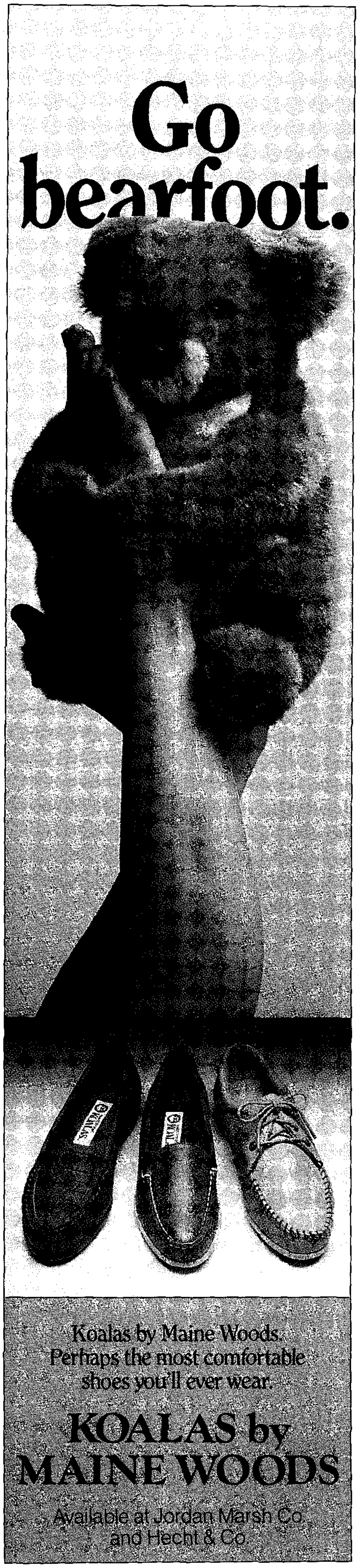

bright, would point out in *The New Yorker* in 1972, "Having controlled the United Nations for many years as tightly and as easily as a big-city boss controls his party machine, we had got used to the idea that the United Nations was a place where we could work our will."

Senator Fulbright's candor was exceptional, and unfamiliar to the public. In a contrasting, and prevalent, vein, in 1985 Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, denouncing Soviet abuses of the international civil service as "forbidden by the United Nations Charter," could declare with little fear of knowledgeable contradiction, "We keep to the rules. They do not. And they despise us because we do."

ACCOUNTABILITY, that source of institutional health, had been excluded from United Nations experience; and, along with it, indivisibly, the stimulus of direct public engagement and response. "It is not a United Nations Organization," Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn was to say, in his Nobel address of 1970, "but a United Governments Organization." In offering itself as the mere creature of its member governments, the United Nations system entered a state of arrested moral development, marked by the habitual emblems of immaturity: demands for approval, and incapacity for individual or collective self-questioning. The organization emerged from its definitive trauma of the McCarthy years—which had encompassed the forced resignation of its principal officer, the exposure of his chief deputy as a national agent, and the suicide of his legal adviser, together with a host of less conspicuous tragedies—with no admission of error, no gesture of atonement, no effort at self-recognition. No official inquiry into the motives and actions of Lie, Price, and their leading collaborators was even proposed; or into the exact circumstances leading to Feller's suicide, which remain obscure today. The attitudes and policies reflected in Lie's revealed collusion with the United States authorities were never examined for their wider implications and possible influence on world affairs. An official proclamation of standards of conduct for the international staff, drawn up in 1954 under Dag Hammarskjöld, compounded the schism between a mistrustful personnel and an autocratic administration; and, since it did not address the misconduct of the Secretariat's leading officials, or the institutionalized consequences of their violations, was irrelevant to the story of the organization's first nine years.

No just venture could prosper in such conditions. But the United Nations was particularly unsuited to a reversal of founding principles which made a paradox—or mockery—of the organization's insistent claim to moral standing. The United Nations had been established as a center of standards, charged with maintaining and extending the benefits of liberty and order around the world. Integrity as well as practical service was explicit in the terms of Secretariat employment, necessitating individual moral courage as well as organizational distinction. By its very anxiety to annihilate the Secretariat's independence at the outset, the U.N.'s most powerful member state had shown keen awareness of the potential that organized internationalism might develop, in a convulsed, contracting, and nuclear world, should its valid endeavors progressively capture the public interest.

Speaking, in 1936, of "the spacious conception" of the League of Nations, Winston Churchill had stressed the imponderable public power touching such an enterprise: "You must not underrate the force which these ideals exert. . . . One does not know how these seeds are planted by the winds of the centuries in the hearts of the working people." Despite the constitutional authority—embodied in the opening words of the Charter—of world citizenry over the nature and direction of the United Nations, intelligent public engagement has been the least nurtured element of the organization's latent potential. The public has been regarded as a passive and uniformly unenlightened audience for U.N. proclamations, and as a sounding board for the vanity of U.N. officials. The possibility of progress toward durable resolution of disputes rests, nevertheless, with the active enlistment of what Dag Hammarskjöld called "the final, least tangible, but perhaps most important new factor in diplomacy: mass public opinion as a living force in international affairs . . . the expression of a democratic mass civilization that is still in its infancy, giving to the man in the street and to group reactions a new significance in foreign policy.”

WHEN the United Nations was inaugurated, it was not imagined as an entity with concerns other than the public good. In 1952, however, to facilitate the arbitrary dismissals required by his secret pact with United States authorities, Trygve Lie sought and received from the U.N. General Assembly the revised staff regulations that, together with other portentous changes, omitted the former prohibition against recruits having discreditable “connections with Fascism or Nazism.” These revised rules also stated, in respect to employment in the international civil service, that “the Secretary-General may at any time terminate the appointment if, in his opinion, such action would be in the interest of the United Nations.” Patently a formula for cloaking improprieties, the allusion to unspecified “interest” initiated, also, a new stage of United Nations history. In its years under Lie and Price, the Secretariat had acquired concerns and purposes at variance with ethical and legal standards prevailing in what would thenceforth be persistently referred to at the United Nations as “the outside world” and “the real world”—expressions employed not in regretful consciousness of the organization’s detachment but in a spirit of exclusivity, and of condescension to the uninitiated remainder of humanity. The denial, at the bidding of member states, of due process within the institution itself would be reflected in a pitiless forfeiture of U.N. obligations to defend the human rights of oppressed individuals and unsupported minorities around the globe.

In 1952, “the interest of the United Nations” encompassed in the new official phrase was supremely related to the power—political, psychological, and financial—of the United States over the organization. By 1975, however, the sources of pressure, and of the urge to appeasement, had diversified. In refusing to appeal to the North Vietnamese authorities on behalf of millions of refugees trapped in the terminal chaos of the Vietnam War, Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim declared, “It is not in the interest of the United Nations to get involved in this political aspect.” Featuring those words in its Quotation of the Day, the *Times* reported, on April 3, 1975, that Wald-

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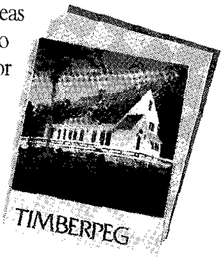

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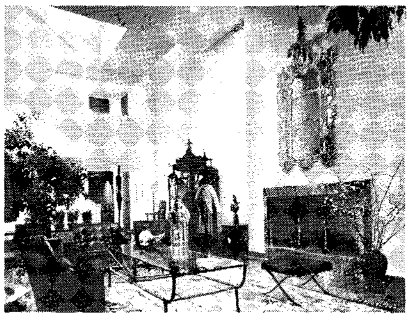

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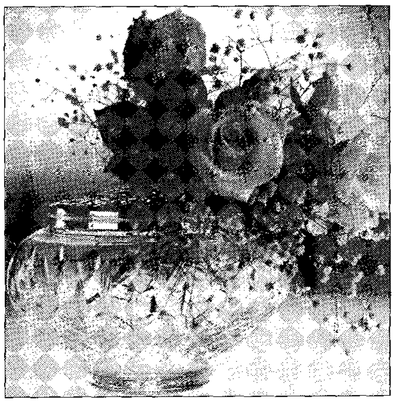

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heim "made it clear that he believed a public appeal by him to the Communists in Vietnam to allow refugees to leave would be 'counterproductive.' " The *Times* went on to say, "Mr. Waldheim, in a rare show of emotion, expressed bitterness over accusations published in the United States that he was biased and was sensitive to Communist pressures. 'This is unfair,' Mr. Waldheim said, his face reddening. 'I have to weigh very carefully the interests of all the 138 member states.' " On the same theme, according to the *International Herald Tribune* of April 8, 1975, "Mr. Waldheim said he had no intention of resigning because of criticism directed against him. 'The criticism comes from the West exclusively,' he said. 'From no other part of the world. On the contrary, the rest of the world seems satisfied.' "

In a previous episode regarding large numbers of helpless fugitives, the League of Nations and its officials had refused to involve themselves in Hitler's persecution of German Jews, choosing to regard the matter, after 1933, as an internal question not touching the jurisdiction of the League. In 1935, the League of Nations High Commissioner for German Refugees, James McDonald, resigned over that issue, pointing out in a public statement that the Covenant of the League of Nations—an instrument analogous to the subsequent Charter of the United Nations—specifically empowered the League to intercede in such calamities, and adding, "I cannot remain silent. . . . When domestic policies threaten the demoralization and exile of hundreds of thousands of human beings, considerations of diplomatic correctness must yield to those of common humanity." It is probable—although, in those early years of Nazism, not assured—that intercession by the League would have proved ineffectual. Events might well have moved inexorably to their same conclusions—but not, for the League, with the same moral disgrace. The League's refusal at that time to deplore the inhumanities of Nazism sealed its dishonor as well as its enfeeblement, leaving it unable to cite in after years even an inspired gesture during the crucial event of Europe's modern story; and provided precedent for similar dereliction at the United Nations.

In April, 1975, no Secretariat leader felt obliged to dissociate himself from Waldheim's statement on the "counterproductivity" of an immediate appeal on behalf of refugees. "The best the United Nations can do," an unidentified U.N. official told the *Times*, "is preserve its impartiality and usefulness for the future." The United Nations had been virtually silent on the Vietnam conflict throughout the preceding decade.

"LOYALTY," which—as the slogan, cynical or hysterical, of the McCarthyist movement—had dominated the national experience of the United States during the United Nations' formative years, was an early preoccupation of the Secretariat leadership. The undefined "interest" of the United Nations formally promulgated in 1952 had already demanded attestations of an allegiance distinct from those loyalties to principle and public service required by the organization's constitution. Lie and Price had repeatedly insisted on an automatic fidelity on the part of the staff to the person of the Secretary-General, rather than to the provisions of the Charter, or to the truth. On October 2, 1950, in response to a staff attempt to bring administrative violations to the attention of the General Assembly, Byron Price stated, in a menacing circular distributed throughout the Secretariat, "If any specific cases of disloyalty to the Secretary-General appear, there will be no choice but to call them to his attention." In 1951, as Trygve Lie prepared to dismiss a young Staff Committee representative who had protested Lie's violations, he declared, "If the staff in New York want to make trouble, the issue will be a simple one; it will be a question of either loyalty to Mr. Robinson"—the vice-chairman of the Staff Committee—"or loyalty to me."

The "termination"—in the fateful U.N. idiom—of this employee, a Canadian, was the fourth dismissal by Lie and Price from the Staff Committee leadership of seven elected members, of whom, by 1953, only one would remain. The action conclusively intimidated organized staff resistance, which was now to stay subdued for a generation. Awarding damages in this case, the Administrative Tribunal commended "the high qualities possessed by the Applicant" and "the shortage of persons of his knowledge and experience," which

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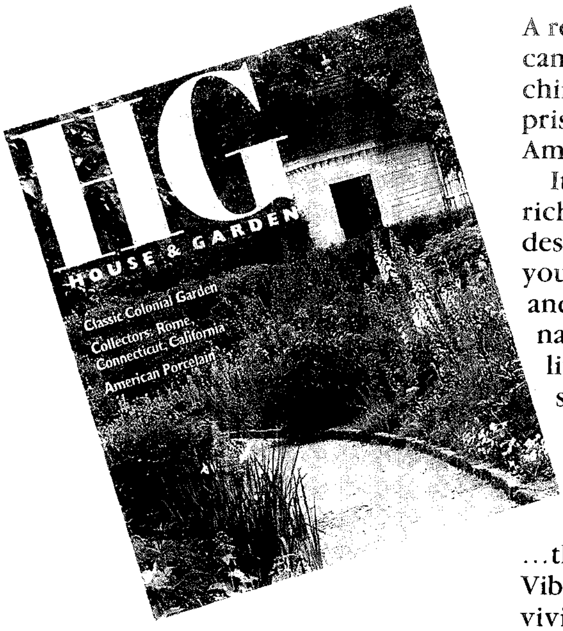

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In March, 1953, a debate was held in the U.N. General Assembly arising out of a report on personnel policies presented by the departing Trygve Lie. (Of this mendacious document, a Soviet representative stated, with undeniable accuracy, "There is no truth whatsoever in the assertion in Mr. Trygve Lie's report . . . that 'it has always been [his] policy . . . to uphold the international character of the Secretariat, and to resist all pressures from whatever source which could have the effect of undermining its independence as defined in the Charter.' The procedures followed in the Secretariat indicate the exact opposite.") In an intervention historic in the context of the Secretariat's later fortunes, the chief French delegate, Henri Hoppenot, who had been Lie's most eloquent critic among governmental representatives, called for immediate reversal of abuses that, with their "menacing consequences," precluded the creation of a valid international civil service. Proposing, on a note of urgency, specific remedies—all of which would be ignored—Hoppenot stated:

> An end must be put to everything that seems to make the Secretary-General's post an autocratic one, to everything that tends to make the staff subject to the whims and caprices of their superiors and makes careers—and even employment—dependent upon blind obedience to such absolute power.

Critics of the French government's subsequent indifference to the United Nations—to, in de Gaulle's phrase, "*ce machin*"—take no reckoning of the early French effort to save the organization from its formative wounds.

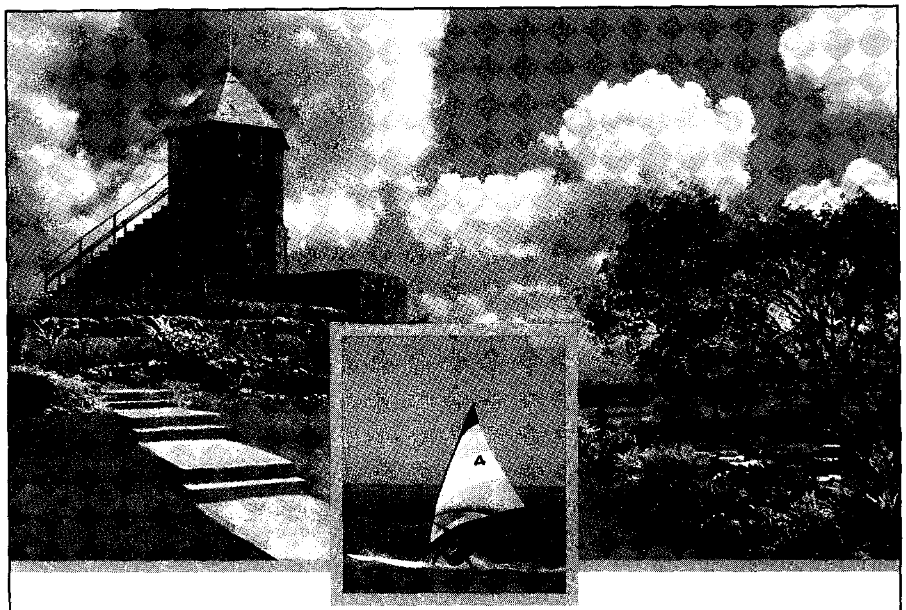
ORIGINATING with Lie and Price, the call for unquestioning subservience to an office and a personality gained decided authority during the tenure of Dag Hammarskjöld, to whose temperament the concept was congenial. Hammarskjöld was forty-seven when, in April, 1953, he came to the United Nations from a ministerial post in the Swedish Foreign Office. He was fifty-six when he died, on United Nations service, in a plane crash near Ndola, in Northern Rhodesia, on the evening of September 17, 1961—the anniversary of the day on which, in 1948, Count Folke Bernadotte, Hammarskjöld's fellow-Swede and U.N. mediator, was assassinated in Jerusalem. The only Secretary-General to stimulate, by personal and attestable effort, universal interest in the organization's potential, he is also the sole United Nations leader whose personality sets him apart as a figure of wide interest and arouses a wish—as yet unsatisfied by biographers and commentators—to learn its sources and deeper manifestations. He is, too, the single notable instance of a man whose powers were extended and fulfilled in the United Nations ambience, which more commonly acts as a swift reductive.

Born into a prominent Swedish family, Hammarskjöld received the liberal education of his class, whose manners and northern outlook he reflected. He had, like Goethe, a stern, cold father and a tender, spirited mother, to both of whose memories he was faithful. In him, these parental elements did not coalesce into creative genius but evidently remained disparate and conflicting. His own best writings—in particular, the brief, late memoir, "Castle Hill," that recalls the fortress setting of his early years at Uppsala—testify to a fastidious sensibility. There is also much testimony to the moodiness that showed itself in frigidity, in offensiveness, and in a habit of condescension that swelled, in the closing phase of his life, toward imbalance. Beyond the culture of his upbringing, Hammarskjöld had a love of poetry and an affinity for all the arts, together with maturity of intellectual thought and expression—attributes that astonished in the United Nations circle, where they had by then become extremely rare. His reserve was tinged in his last years with an apparent wish to propose the clues to his own enigma; and his journal, "Markings," posthumously published, is less an account of the moral progress of an intensely private soul than a self-conscious and at times histrionic rendering of such a journey. Its illumination is therefore limited and often inadvertent. The entries show not only awareness of a hypothetical reader but an underassessment of that reader's powers of penetration.

The coincidence of Hammarskjöld's own need for arduous dedication and his abrupt selection for a position of assigned but disregarded moral leadership was greeted by him as a virtually religious responsibility. Chosen for the post, by United Nations member governments, as a bleak, obsessive bureaucrat whose self-effacing officialism appeared to guarantee obedience, he brought instead to his U.N. task the fervor of vocation, the vigor of released energies, and an exaltation both productive and problematical. What made this possible is—like almost everything of deep meaning in his experience and nature—yet to be discovered. Much is undoubtedly still to be learned, too, of his official actions and of the influences, interior and external, that bore on them.

Hammarskjöld's contribution to history derived from his ingenious development, as he gained confidence in his U.N. role, of a basis for independent political intervention by the United Nations Secretary-General. Demonstrated most effectively in regard to the Suez crisis of 1956, the concept was also expressed in a continuity of prognosis and initiative which created an intelligent presence in world affairs; and this longer perspective may be observed in Hammarskjöld's intercessions in Asia, where he foresaw the makings of catastrophe. The possibility of such a role, placed by the U.N. Charter at the disposal of the Secretariat leadership and laid waste by Trygve Lie, required for its affirmative use exceptional human qualities of a kind that Hammarskjöld at his best possessed.

The formidable aspect of Hammarskjöld's character, with its conscious superiority, did not markedly favor his work at the United Nations; and his distinction was to some measure achieved in the face of it. Hammarskjöld displayed an autocrat's imperviousness to defects of his own policies; an autocrat's incapacity for delegating authority; and an autocrat's indifference, also, to conditions of individual or collective injustice that did not directly touch his imagination. The United Nations, which might—and, in pursuance of its own proclamations, ought to—have led the postwar world in the defense of human rights, made no advance in that field during his tenure, when countless thousands of unavailing appeals gathered dust in U.N. archives. United Nations responsibilities toward the status of women—the organization being, nominally, the global custodian of women's rights—were similarly allowed to stagnate; while the U.N. administration's attitude was expressed, then as now, in obdurate discrimination against its own female employees. There was no woman among Ham-



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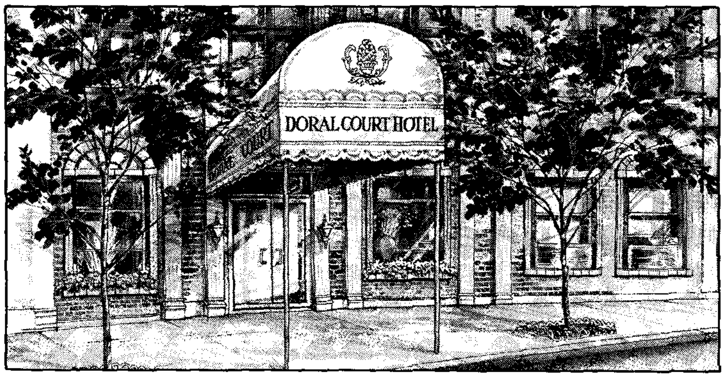

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marskjöld's senior deputies; and, during his term of office, only isolated instances existed of women in notably responsible posts at the Secretariat. (According to personnel statistics issued by the United Nations in July of this year, two women are now employed in the Secretariat's most senior category, as contrasted with fifty-one males. In the immediately subordinate category, the figures are, respectively, six and ninety-four. The imbalance is "corrected" only in the most junior and clerical grades.) Throughout his life, Hammarskjöld's chosen associates, in his work as in his private life, appear to have been—like his correspondents and memorialists—almost exclusively male.

During his first year in office, Hammarskjöld sought and largely obtained from the General Assembly administrative powers that, invested in the Secretary-General, were at variance with the intentions of the Charter toward the international civil service. (His attempt to modify the authority of the Administrative Tribunal was acceded to only in part, but the standing and importance of that body declined.) Hammarskjöld's actions in this respect were condemned in a searching study, by Claude Julien, of erosion of rights at the United Nations, published in *Le Monde* on November 19th and 20th of 1953—a study that may be read with much interest today, when history has exposed the inadequacies of successive Secretaries-General. In this course the new Secretary-General was supported by his deputies, although with isolated expressions of dissent. Guillaume Georges-Picot, the respected senior French member of the Secretariat, strongly protested such a concentration of administrative power in the Secretary-General. An imperious communication of March, 1954, from Hammarskjöld to his senior officers, quoted by Brian Urquhart in his official study, "Hammarskjöld," makes clear that Hammarskjöld's demand for "a spirit of true teamwork, with the loyalty that such work requires" was to be interpreted as a call not simply for a proper measure of coöperation and order but for obedience to a leader who regarded disagreement with his views on significant questions as "symptoms of a tendency to put other interests before those of the United Nations and —in some cases—of what I must call personal disloyalty." Georges-Picot resigned from the Secretariat at the end of 1954.

The renewed insistence on unconditional loyalty to a personality, whose requirements are equated with those of the United Nations, again illustrates the remoteness of the U.N. service from democratic procedures. Such a demand might have raised questions in an advanced national civil service, where it could have been appealed. In this central matter, as in others, Hammarskjöld's inaccessibility to rational opinion is disquieting. Byron Price had departed—leaving his administrative precepts entrenched, as it seems, forever. Hammarskjöld's retention of the remaining senior officials, predominantly of American nationality, who had either supported or declined to oppose Lie's abrogations, and his failure to recruit or retain persons of talent, or to expel sycophants, were part of a striking remoteness from realities by then besetting the U.N. service. They may presumably be understood, also, as indications of intolerance for any strength of character that his temperament rejected as competitive.

Like most of his deputies, Hammarskjöld had no sustained contact with the staff body, and his pronouncements concerning the organization's condition and morale were misconceived. The abstractions set forth on paper as administrative policy during his U.N. years did nothing to mitigate the alienation of a body of persons deprived of a merit system, uncertain of their rights, intimidated by procedures of surveillance and by the network of secret files maintained on its employees by the organization itself; and conscious, above all, that adherence to the explicit principles of their appointment would result in their victimization or dismissal. The separation of United Nations affairs from normal legal and ethical accountability had left the international staff quite without the "effective protection from external pressure and internal domineering" called for as a matter of urgency by Henri Hoppenot of France in March, 1953. Many of those fifty-one original member states against whose interference the U.N. Charter had provided were bound, by watchful populations in their own lands, to an observance of basic rights under laws and regulations far more exigent than the policies applied within the United Nations.

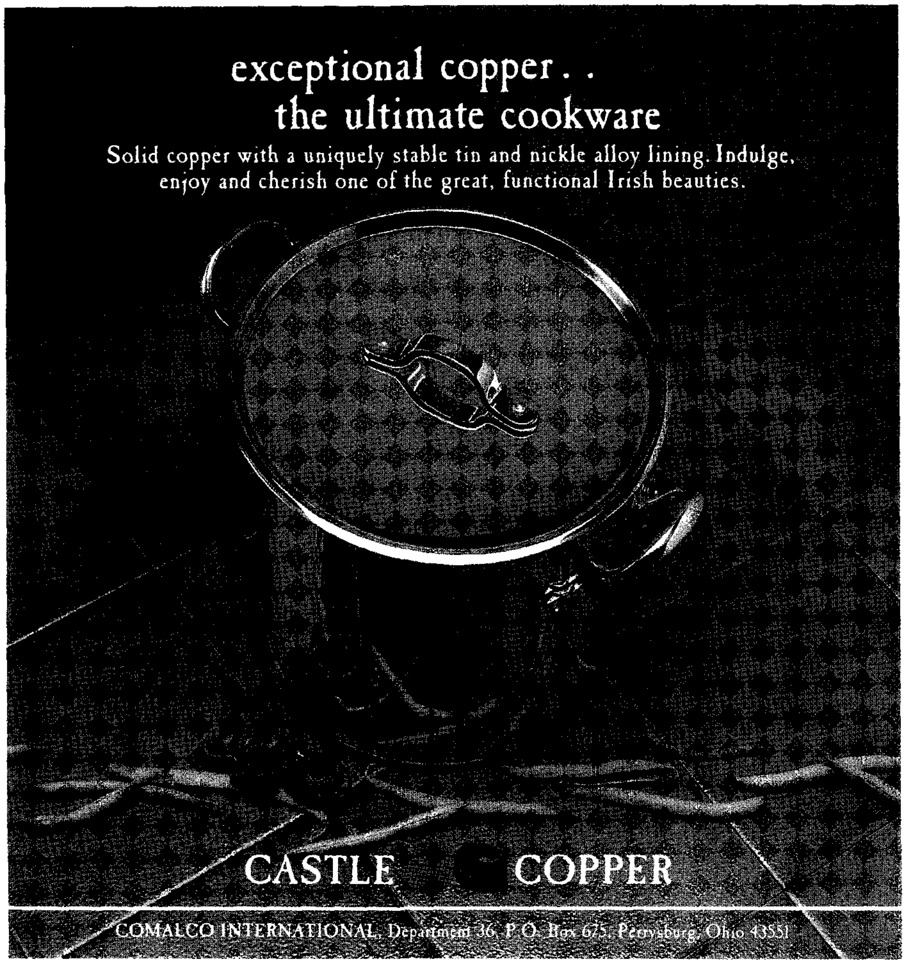
Some realization of basic disorder was forced on Hammarskjöld near the end of his life, by the scope and complexity of his expanding political initiatives, which exposed the deficiencies of the Secretariat: "There is," he acknowledged, in his eighth year of office, "not enough of a diplomatic tradition or staff with training in political and diplomatic field activities to meet the needs which have developed over the years." That late awareness was subsumed, with his death, into the tenebrae of Secretariat affairs.

Conor Cruise O'Brien, writing shortly after Hammarskjöld's death, likened the meetings between Hammarskjöld and his senior officers to those "between a youngish headmaster and a bright sixth form." Within the staff, the attitudes of Hammarskjöld's colleagues toward their Secretary-General were, at the time, characterized even more astringently. Yet the analogy of a school—still ingenuously invoked on occasion by the organization's spokesmen—remains pertinent to the pervasive immaturity, the petty ascendancies and tyrannies of Secretariat life.

In a bizarre episode, which was to culminate in the apparent suicide of a senior official who had opposed his orders on a claim of principle, Hammarskjöld set forth his views in a long personal letter of dismissal, of July 3, 1958, published almost immediately as a United Nations press release:

> It is further my view that any moral reservations which might have prevented you from obeying my instructions do not ameliorate the impropriety of your conduct as a member of the Secretariat in refusing an order by the Secretary-General relative to official papers. It is my view that if you considered your clear official duty to acknowledge my authority in Secretariat matters to be in conflict with your private moral convictions arising from an unauthorized assumption of authority, it was your duty to resign from the service.

This official, a Dane named Povl Bang-Jensen, had, following an assignment concerned with Hungarian refugees, refused to relinquish papers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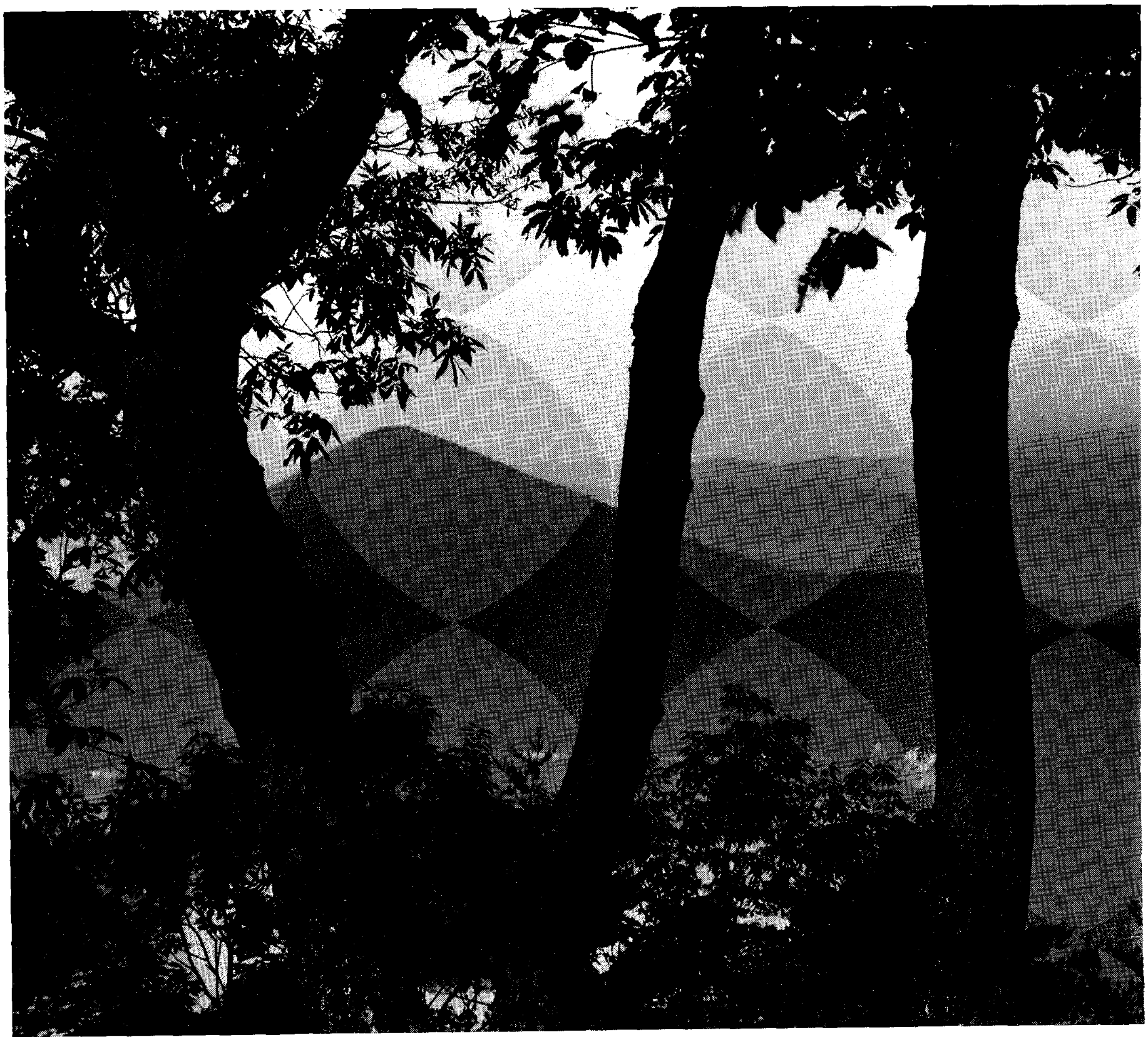

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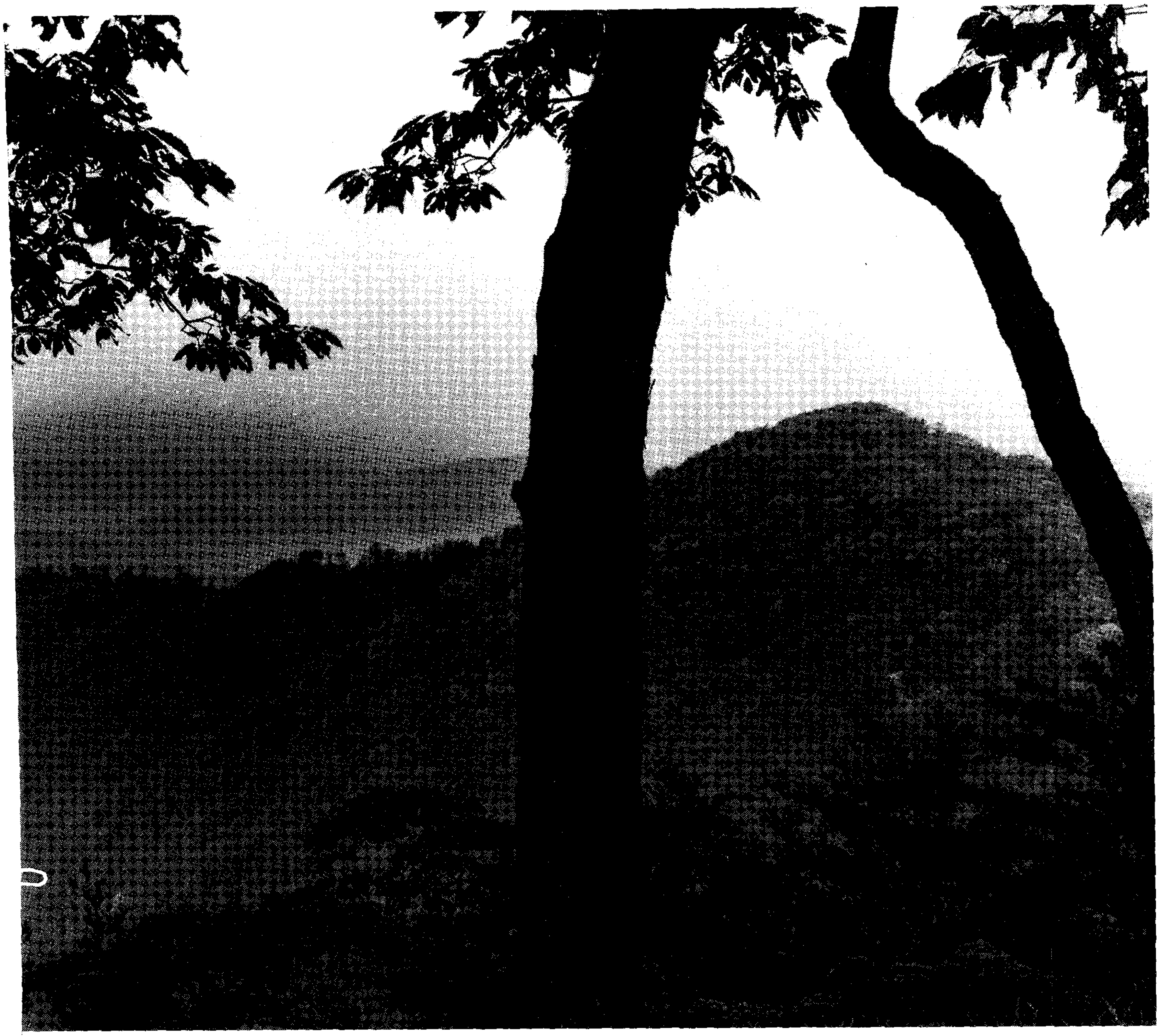

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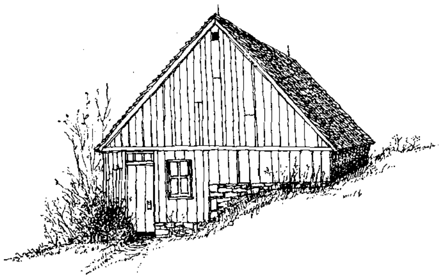
identifying activists in the Hungarian uprising of 1956, for fear—as he contended—that the confidentiality of such documents could not be protected at the international Secretariat. His position was repudiated by Secretariat leaders, who later asserted—possibly with foundation—that the man was unbalanced (leaving, in turn, the question as to why he had then been entrusted with a vital humanitarian mission). Aside from its particular merits, the case served as a forum for Hammarskjöld's views, expressed with despotic ferocity, with regard to the unreflecting submission he required from his staff.

A disciplinary body composed of senior members of the United Nations circle reproduced Hammarskjöld's attitude in its censure of this "defendant," declaring that "the staff member must accept the findings of the higher authority or leave the service." This psychology of subordination, in which "moral reservations" were unlikely to be raised and all too likely to be punished, had its origins in the Secretariat's traumatic early years, whose lessons it ignored. Undiscriminating allegiance to a series of fallible personalities was ever more aggressively proposed, and meekly accepted, as a virtue. That such "loyalty" could become, in the upper ranks, a cloak for pusillanimous cronyism and that it might involve betrayal of the public trust were dangers ostensible but unexamined. In 1982, an admiring article in the New York *Times Magazine* concerning Brian Urquhart, then the Secretariat's senior Under-Secretary-General, reported that "though impatient with protocol and strong on improvisation, he is an organization man, intensely loyal to the institution and to its current chief, whatever his private reservations may be." With only the rarest exceptions, this definition of loyalty was applied unreservedly by the United Nations senior circle until the exposure, in March, 1986, of Kurt Waldheim's deceptions.

When a concept of institutional allegiance entails a forsaking of the righteous who, like James McDonald at the League of Nations, speak out from a larger responsibility to humanity and history, and to themselves, it will—whatever its immediate shrouding in contemporary excuse—be challenged at last by the independent destiny of events, and adversely judged by posterity.

AMONG the new interests of the United Nations, material rewards assumed greatly increased importance for the senior staff—becoming from the time of Hammarskjöld's death, and with the growing affluence of the Western world, an always prominent and often paramount consideration. This was a result of diminished satisfaction and stimulus in the work itself, which now seemed to require some more tangible form of compensation. The early idealists who in applying to the United Nations had, in their eagerness to serve, scarcely inquired about their salaries had long since been eliminated. The exhortation of the architect Le Corbusier to the U.N. Headquarters Commission in 1946 that the United Nations should "not become 'great' like Babylon" was unremembered. From the onset of the nineteen-sixties, the habits and thousand annual entertainments of the United Nations General Assembly increasingly recalled a picture by Courbet, "The Return from the Conference," in which a procession of carousing priests, dispersing from a church assembly, scandalizes a local populace. (Of this painting, later cut to pieces by a religious zealot, some photographs survived a police seizure of negatives in 1867.)

The extravagance of governmental representation at the United Nations set the tone of Secretariat expectations. In 1945, the Preparatory Commission of the United Nations had linked material benefits to the hypothetical qualities of the organization's future leaders, recommending that "the salary and allowances of the Secretary-General should be such as to enable a man of eminence and high attainment to accept and fulfill with dignity the high responsibility of the post. Similar considerations apply to the other principal higher officers." Although large payments were consequently declared necessary in order to attract recruits of exceptional ability, such persons were in practice seldom sought or valued by the organization; and might not, in any case, have made wealth a first consideration. An eagerness not only for high salaries and allowances but for individual ex-gratia payments, amounting on occasion to several hundred thousand dollars, stimulated, during the second Waldheim administration, rumors of the corrupt sale of certain profitable posts within the Secretariat. It also encouraged the practice of national subsidies to numerous employees, many of whom are, in a further violation of the U.N. Charter, seconded from national administrations to which they will return. The incompatibility of the organization's material practices with its stated aims intensified the alienation of the U.N. system from "the outside world," both at administrative centers and in the field. Although it contributed heavily to public skepticism toward the organization, this immoderation was defiantly magnified with the passage of years.



Press reports concerning the United Nations' "regular budget" refer mainly to funds committed for administrative needs, and exclude the far greater operational costs of the U.N. system. The annual over-all budget of the U.N. has, of recent years, been informally estimated at six billion dollars. However, I find it impossible to establish a reliable yearly total for the U.N.'s attestable over-all expenditures, which appear to be vastly in excess of that sum. The organization informs me that no comprehensive figure can be provided. And piecemeal calculation cannot hope to include with accuracy the costs of every affiliate, subsidiary, and ad-hoc undertaking of the U.N. system; or to encompass the complex expenses of the U.N.'s financial institutions, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. So far as I am aware, no attempt has ever been made to assess the further extended financial commitment of member governments in maintaining within their foreign ministries bureaus of United Nations affairs and in participating, with a large diversity of offices, personnel, and counterpart expenditures, in United Nations projects and meetings around the globe. It is my impression that no one knows even the approximate cost, to world citizen-

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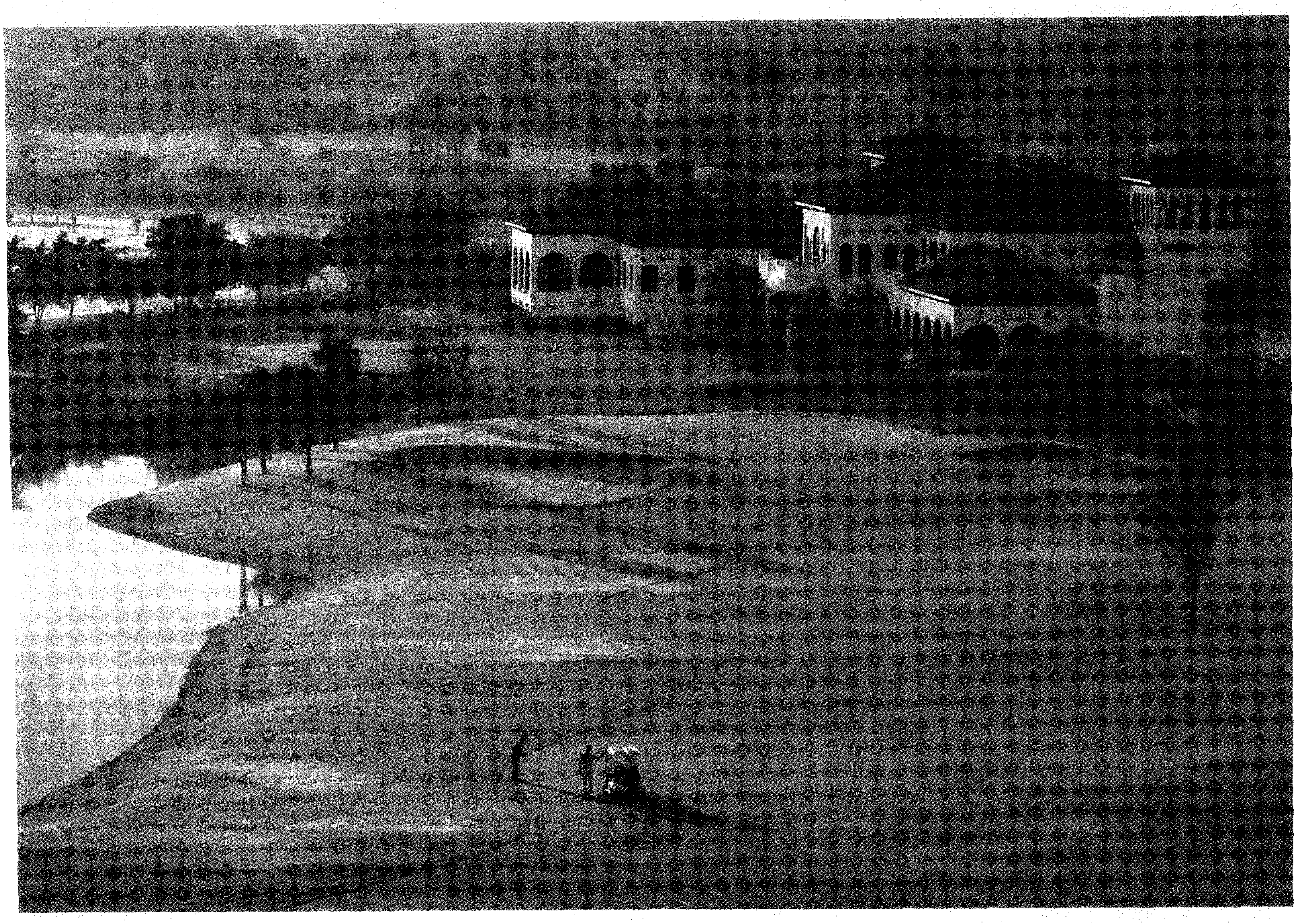

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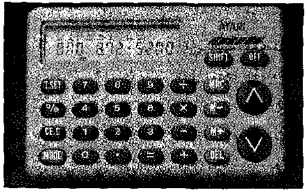

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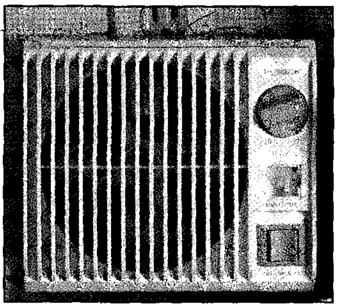

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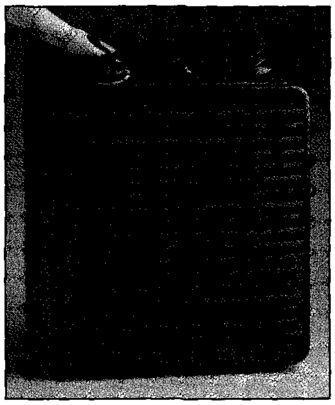

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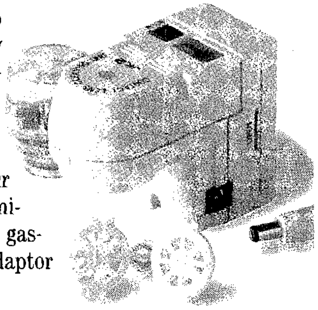

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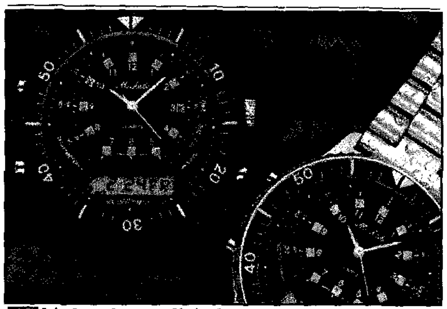

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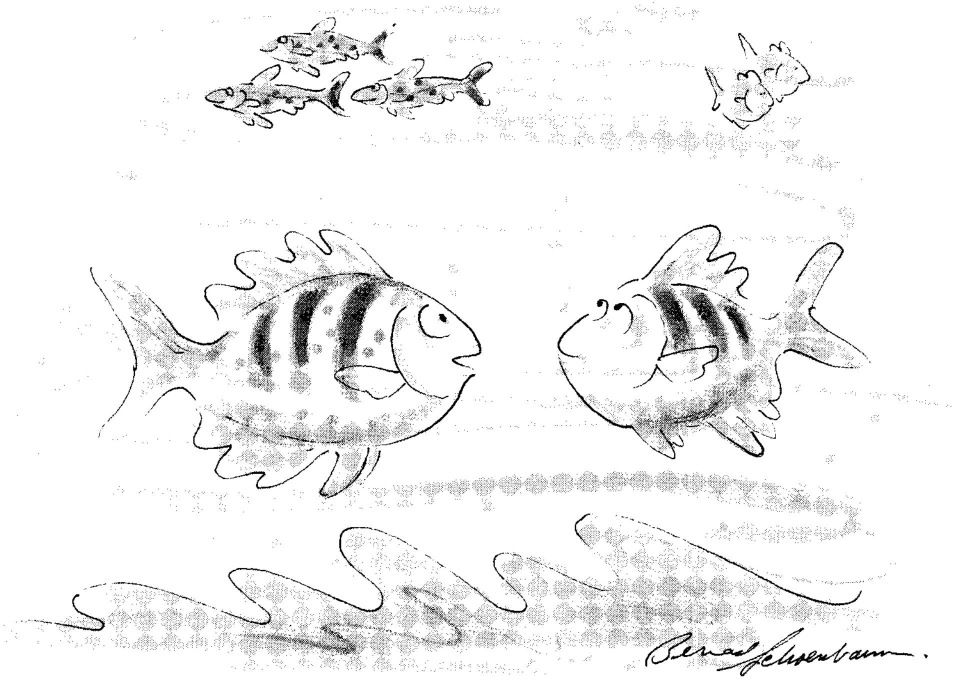
THE MEDIA DEVELOPMENT GROUP ©1989 C98 ADVERTISEMENT ry, of the United Nations enterprise.

In June of 1979, an exposition by Ronald Kessler, in the Washington *Post*, dealing with the U.N.'s finances brought denunciation from both the United Nations and the U.S. State Department. Charles W. Maynes, then Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs, conceded that the *Post's* figures were accurate but claimed, according to the *Post*, that the intricate nature of the United Nations system—by which a cumbersome administrative structure is reproduced, and jealously guarded, in each of a dozen specialized agencies, and in adjuncts such as the U.N. Development Programme—precluded assessment by outsiders.

Following the *Post's* study, *U.S. News & World Report* published, in September, 1979, an article dealing with the allocation of expenditures within the U.N. system. With reference to material conditions for the senior categories of "the 44,000 persons" then permanently employed by the United Nations, the article stated, "President Carter is the only official in the U.S. government who is higher paid than dozens of U.N. officials." This appears to be a correct summation of the financial status of Secretariat leaders in the latter phase of the Waldheim administration. The official total of United Nations staff was given, in recent months, as 51,130, exclusive of many thousands of employees holding short-term contracts or serving as local recruits with U.N. field offices.



"They're terribly mainstream."

• •

The siting of the United Nations headquarters in a city that sometimes perceives luxury and prominence as an index of achievement had encouraged the organization's excesses. The cloud of commentators and social aspirants who hovered about the embassies and principal officers of the organization would hardly have clung to them in more modest, if more exemplary, conditions—in which, indeed, few U.N. officials would have continued to serve. With the advent of Kurt Waldheim, emphatic importance was attached by the Secretary-General himself to the visible rewards and precedence of office—ostentation playing its part in the uncritical approval extended by the U.N.'s organized adherents to both the man and the institution. The transfer to United Nations custody of a town house at No. 3 Sutton Place, donated by Arthur A. Houghton, Jr., as a permanent official New York residence for the U.N.'s chief officer and his family, was completed in July, 1972; and Waldheim was the first occupant. This well-intended gift conclusively defined the Secretary-General's position as one of wealth and social prominence. Waldheim's three predecessors had lived at private addresses of their own choosing that provided some association with normal life. The Burmese schoolmaster and diplomat U Thant, who succeeded Hammarskjöld, had largely avoided U.N. festivities, preferring his domestic privacy on the city's outskirts. By contrast, in the Waldheim era the Secretary-General's house became the culminating point of the social and material aspirations now associated with the United Nations. For their part, the organization's senior officials chose to assume that a show of wealth supported by public funds in no way impaired their claim to speak for the destitute and suffering throughout the world—a situation recalling the comment of Cato the Censor on the supposed holy powers of the ancient soothsayers known as haruspices: that he wondered how one haruspex could look another in the eye without laughing.

The waste of public funds by the United Nations has been an expression, merely, of a far greater waste of the organization's opportunities and human resources. The latent power of the U.N. concept has always resided in the public confidence it might generate by high performance and demonstrated integrity. To that unrealized possibility financial considerations are—despite the sovereign importance accorded them at the United Nations—quite subsidiary.

In 1977, a detailed study of American participation in international organizations, issued by the Senate Committee on Government Operations, considered the material circumstances of United Nations personnel in relation to the inefficiency of the organization. This survey, which found pay and benefits at the United Nations astronomically higher than in the United States civil service but unrelated to ability or productivity, was disregarded. It remains a valuable record of the organization's condition during the second term of the Waldheim administration. In attributing the Secretariat's debility to the adverse effects of national interventions, the Senate committee did not trace the origins of that debility to the actions of the United States.

THE election of Kurt Waldheim as the fourth Secretary-General of the United Nations, in December, 1971, followed the rejection by the major powers of several more substan-

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tial candidates. Of these, the Finn Max Jakobson was reportedly judged by the Soviets as incapacitated by his Jewish background for dealing with the Arab nations. Thus, while Waldheim's adult military past under Hitler was no obstacle to his appointment, Jakobson was apparently ruled out for a circumstance of his birth. (In 1986, Jakobson himself commented, "I think that was an excuse, that Moscow thought I would be too strong a Secretary-General in the tradition of Dag Hammarskjöld, and it was worried that the prestige of the office would strengthen Finland's concept of neutrality.")

Among prominent commentators, only the syndicated columnist Joseph Kraft appears to have condemned the choice, writing immediately after Waldheim's election:

> The voting was a process whereby the great powers eliminated candidates of merit. The result is a man almost certain to bring the office of secretary-general down to the low estate already reached by the Security Council and the General Assembly. . . .
>
> With four strong men blocked, and the prospect of a long deadlock ahead, the hour of Ambassador Waldheim came round. Many delegates and not a few officials in the secretariat could have voiced a strong case against him . . . that he is superficial and without strong moral force; that he has done nothing of note except be pliant with all comers, beginning with the Nazis whom he served in World War II.
>
> But what does all that signify for the great powers? Ambassador Waldheim was the preferred Russian candidate precisely because of his pliancy. The French admired his fluency in French. The British and Americans, though preferring other candidates, were not prepared to dig in for them. And the Chinese who cast an early veto against Ambassador Waldheim, on the grounds that he was the Russian candidate, relented when Vienna gave Peking assurance of his pliancy. . . . In his first public statement after nomination by the Security Council, he emphasized that "in this position one has to know the limits."

Announcing Waldheim's election, the *Times* reported that "one of Mr. Waldheim's greatest assets in his successful campaign was that he was the preferred candidate of the Soviet Union from an early stage and that none of the other big powers strongly opposed him." In a subsequent article, on December 26, 1971, the *Times*—characterizing Waldheim's immediate predecessor, U Thant, as a "conciliator" and alluding to the potential activism of Jakobson—observed that "the circumstances of Mr. Waldheim's election make it pretty clear that he, too, is expected to be a conciliator." However, the *Times* conceded that the Secretary-General "has a great deal of power if he seeks it . . . Most important, he can exercise, if he chooses, a unique moral influence because unlike any other political figure in the world he is not inhibited by narrow national interests."

WALDHEIM'S efforts to secure the U.N. Secretary-Generalship had begun in the nineteen-sixties, when he served as Austria's Ambassador to the United Nations, and intensified in 1971, after he was defeated in his first bid for the Presidency of his country. His suppression of unattractive episodes from his years as a student and soldier under Hitler seems to have developed from the time of his assignment, in 1948, as First Secretary at the Austrian Legation in Paris, where the full details of his wartime experience would, if known, have aroused strong feeling. In none of his previous positions, however, had the elements of public and official scrutiny, of moral claims, and of a singular international prominence rendered the stakes so high, the risks so great, or the deception so conclusive as in the United Nations post, where the bringing to light not simply of his story but of its long concealment would have ended his public career.

In the months preceding the U.N. vote, Waldheim lobbied indefatigably for the Secretary-Generalship. Yet he knew that as a leading candidate for the position he would be investigated by the great powers and possibly by other governments; and that a variety of damaging revelations were in their hands, including a Yugoslav charge implicating him in atrocities during his suppressed wartime service in the Balkans, together with a related file in the War Crimes archive of the United Nations itself.

Waldheim evidently also knew that his candidacy would not result in exposure. How and why he obtained that assurance, and from whom, are now central questions in his ever-unfolding "case." Bureaucratic confusion, which would itself call for scrutiny and censure, cannot possibly account for a coincidence of negligence among numerous government agencies around the world in clearing a candidate of Waldheim's nationality, age, and background for so conspicuous an appoint-

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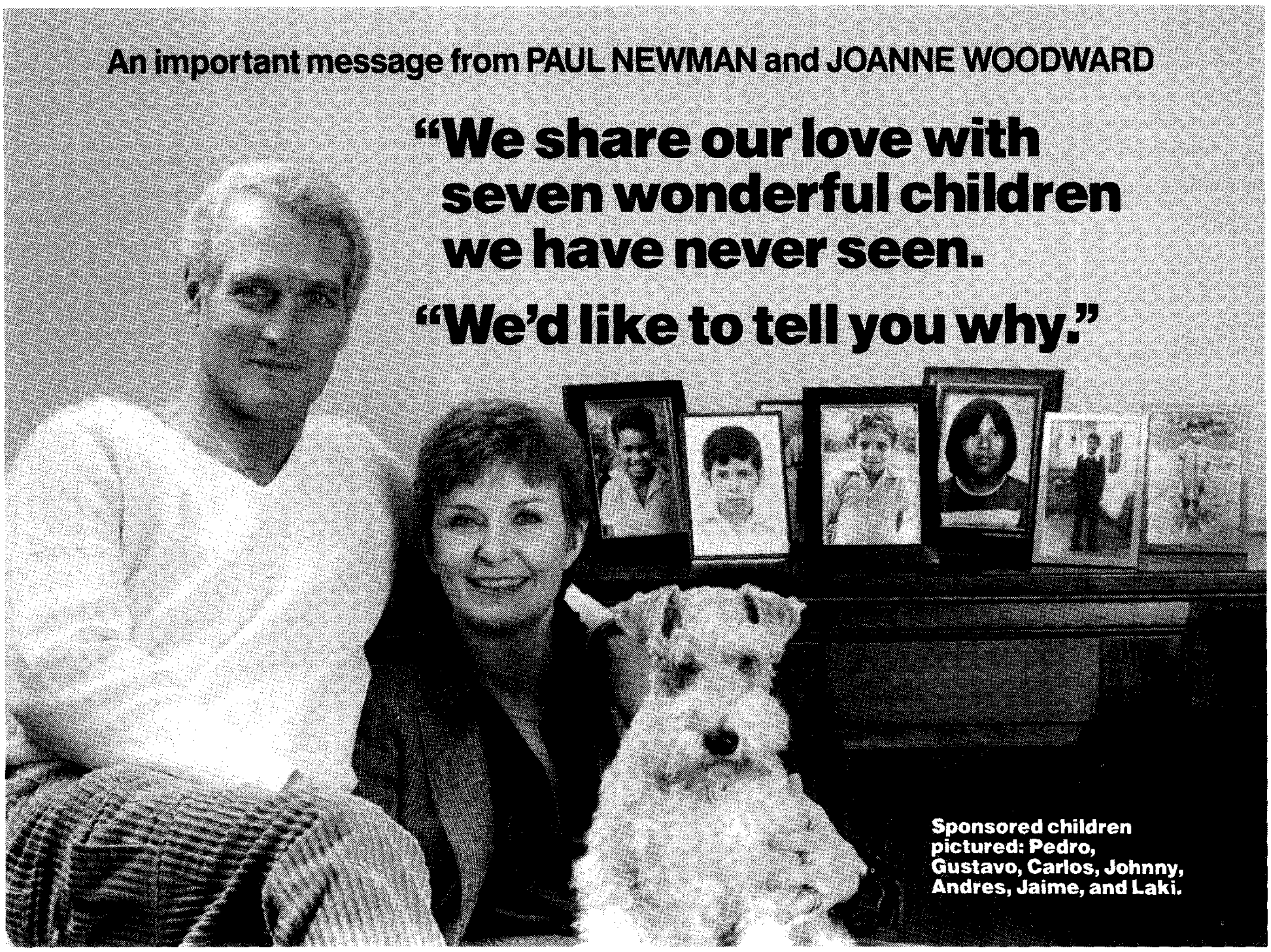

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ment. Recent investigators have speculated that Waldheim may have made some clandestine accommodation with United States authorities in the spring of 1945, when, as he returned to Austria from the Balkans, he was held by United States Military Intelligence for interrogation concerning the political disposition of Yugoslavia. It is also suggested that these contacts continued in later years. Questioned on the theme by the New York *Times* in April, 1986, Karl Gruber, who had been Austria's Foreign Minister in the postwar years, "did not rule out the possibility that Mr. Waldheim had some connection with American intelligence in the years after the war. 'I don't think it probable, but one never really knows,' he said. 'It's quite possible that he did. For us, he was an Austrian official.' "

In his book "Waldheim: The Missing Years," published last year, Robert E. Herzstein, a historian of the Nazi era, gives his view that "throughout the postwar period, including his tenure as U.N. secretary-general, Kurt Waldheim was a U.S. intelligence asset who expected to be—and always was—protected by his friends in the American intelligence community." Such conjectures, which do not lack a circumstantial basis, are at their best attempts to explain an otherwise incomprehensible degree of official protection of Waldheim by Western governments. They cannot be dismissed while those governments remain silent and while the United States Department of Justice refuses to release its file on Waldheim—despite Waldheim's own legitimate, and audacious, challenge to it to do so. Following the decision by the United States Attorney General, in April, 1987, to place Waldheim's name on the so-called Watch List of undesirable aliens prohibited from entering the country, the Austrian authorities also requested that the United States make available the evidence on Waldheim's case. However, no information has as yet been provided.

For Waldheim's entry, in 1945, into his country's foreign service, on the staff of Karl Gruber, his activities under Hitler were officially reviewed. Gruber has related that he assigned this task of investigating Waldheim to his assistant, Fritz Molden, who recalls—in a "white book" entitled "Kurt Waldheim's Wartime Years: A Documentation," prepared in Waldheim's defense by officials of the Austrian Foreign Affairs Ministry in 1987—that he, in turn, referred it first to the Ministry of the Interior and then to the United States authorities, both of which seemingly cleared Waldheim of Nazi associations. In his book "Waldheim and Austria" Richard Bassett, a British journalist long based in Europe, notes the confused and increasingly pro-Austrian context in which such postwar "de-Nazification" inquiries were carried on. Of the accusation lodged against Waldheim with the United Nations War Crimes Commission regarding atrocities in Yugoslavia, Bassett observes that "it is easy to see how, without conclusive evidence, Waldheim, like many others, was not subjected to too arduous an ordeal. Growing distrust of the Yugoslavs, especially after their barbaric massacring of repatriated Croats, Serbs and Slovenes in 1945, also probably contributed to a slackening of the hunt for those who may have carried out orders involving atrocities in the Balkans."

Fritz Molden, who had been, like Gruber, active in the Austrian resistance, was associated with the wartime United States Office of Strategic Services, under Allen W. Dulles. Dulles—whose daughter Molden married in 1948—helped to set up the Central Intelligence Agency in the postwar years and became its director in 1953. He was the brother of John Foster Dulles, who served as Secretary of State in the Eisenhower Administration. Karl Gruber has said that it was "probable" that Molden retained his connections with American intelligence in the years after the war.

In the course of his clearance for career employment in the new Austrian Foreign Affairs Ministry, Waldheim submitted a statement necessarily reporting not only his war service in France, Russia, and southeastern Europe but also his earlier membership in groups with Nazi associations. Robert Herzstein, who has examined the dossier containing this statement, informs us that Waldheim accounted for his enrollment in two such groups by declaring that "he could not have completed his studies without joining the Students League, nor would he have been permitted to begin his legal career without being part of some Nazi-affiliated body like the S.A. Cavalry Corps." Waldheim's application to and acceptance by the faculty of law at the University of Vienna during the years when Austria's centers of learning and her judiciary were rigorously dominated by the Nazis was in itself a strong indication of a formal connection with a Nazi organization. Some attestation of adherence to Nazi doctrine would have been, as Waldheim himself now recounts, a virtual requirement for his law studies—the more so in the case of a student whose father had, as a former supporter of the Austrian reactionary Kurt von Schuschnigg, incurred Nazi displeasure at the time of the Anschluss. (As an adherent of von Schuschnigg's policy for an independent Austria, the older Waldheim was held for hours or days by the Gestapo on at least two occasions, and was dismissed from his post as a superintendent of schools.) Waldheim's repeated assertion, during his years at the United Nations, that he had remained at Vienna after 1941 pursuing his studies in the law should alone have raised immediate questions about his possible affiliation with the Nazi movement. While the original transgression may, according to its context, call upon our understanding, the determination to lie about these matters in after years, and while holding a position of claimed moral leadership, placed Waldheim squalidly and irrevocably in the wrong.

Robert Herzstein relates that in the early nineteen-fifties "the U.S. State Department solicited" from the Austrian authorities "and accepted without question a selectively edited biography of Waldheim that made it seem as if he had no military record at all." That document was presumably the basis of official American pronouncements on Waldheim's early life during his double term at the United Nations. In August, 1988, in response to a renewed inquiry from the World Jewish Congress, the Central Intelligence Agency retracted a former statement that it possessed only one document referring to Kurt Waldheim, but declined to be more forthcoming.

Herzstein's comment that "for all his caution, Waldheim was nonetheless something of a gambler" is borne out by Waldheim's steady postwar quest for a prominence inexorably paralleled by the obscuring of his early life. This aspect of Waldheim's character is most evident in his assiduous candidacy for the Secretary-Generalship. Whatever assurances he may have received from informed governments that his hidden story would not be revealed, he could not guard against its extraneous exposure by some former comrade in arms or through the active curiosity of a scholar or a journalist outside the United Nations circle. The United Nations archives on war criminals had been inexplicably closed to the public since 1949; but the fact that Waldheim was under accusation as a war criminal by the government of Yugoslavia in the postwar years was contained in a master list, known as the Central Registry of War Criminals and Security Suspects, compiled by the United States Army in 1949 and publicly available in American archives since the late nineteen-sixties. In addition to implicating Waldheim in Nazi atrocities, the Yugoslav charge exposed Waldheim's war service in the Balkans during the years when he claimed to be studying in Vienna.

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of many concealed facts from Waldheim's past, assertions would be made within the bureaucracies of Austria, West Germany, and France that senior officials of those governments had been familiar with Waldheim's war record during his years at the United Nations. At the time of his election as Secretary-General, however, in December, 1971, the Western governments kept their knowledge to themselves. George Bush—then United States Ambassador to the U.N., who in 1976 would become the director of the C.I.A.—declared Waldheim "ideally equipped" for "the duties of this high office." And Waldheim was, as Joseph Kraft pointed out, "the preferred Russian candidate precisely because of his pliancy." The basis for Soviet confidence in Waldheim's pliancy has yet to be disclosed; but it was justified. It was to Soviet requirements that Waldheim's most conspicuous—and, on occasion, preposterous—gestures of partiality would be made throughout his United Nations career, a fact repeatedly noted but never pursued by the press.

The anxiety of governments to "eliminate candidates of merit" in favor of this pliable one testified again to their awareness of the moral and practical potential yet remaining in the office of the Secretary-General, and in a valid and efficient international civil service. Above all, it expressed apprehension of the ultimate capacity of such a body, under vigorous leadership, to enlist the public interest in support of a more rational conduct of world affairs. The pattern of Secretariat complaisance, however, was now long established, and with Waldheim's election these governmental anxieties were set at rest.

With hindsight, Waldheim's inaugural reference to "the limits" may be interpreted as a message to those powers who, familiar with his story, had supported his candidacy in the conviction that he must, as Secretary-General, adapt himself to their concerns. By the onset of the nineteen-seventies, however, the invocation of limits at the United Nations had become endemic and mechanical, Waldheim's words then seeming merely to echo a negativism that, at no time apologetic, would over the ensuing decade be aggressively presented as a main virtue by U.N. leaders, with the endorsement of many of their supporters. Similarly, the extreme operational and administrative chaos into which the organization would sink under Waldheim's stewardship was, in its first stages, scarcely distinguishable from the debility already afflicting the United Nations at the time of his election. The new Secretary-General was, indeed, greeted as a possible reformer. The London *Times* declared:

> The first place where Dr. Waldheim will have to display his talents is in the United Nations itself. The organization is in bad shape. Its structure is flabby, and the morale of its staff is low. The situation cries out for an administrator who is prepared to be tough—to rationalize procedures, to promote merit and to dispense with incompetents. If this was done there would be a much better chance of producing a machine which could be called on with some confidence in a crisis.

On the last day of 1971, the New York *Times* discussed the dire condition of the organization, which was then under its recurrent threat of bankruptcy:

> The United Nations moreover has lost prestige and public support in many countries. There are those who say that a more dynamic personality could have given it the dramatic image that would have kept interest in it high.
>
> Mr. Thant is leaving the United Nations at a time when it is being increasingly pushed out of its basic peace-keeping function by the two superpowers, Moscow and Washington, which believe that world order must be maintained in direct negotiation by the big powers . . . Men who have been watching the workings of the United Nations Secretariat and the relations between headquarters and the specialized agencies say that Mr. Thant's biggest failing was his "hopelessness as an administrator." Some diplomats say he lacks the toughness that it would have taken to dismiss incompetent aides. As far as is known, he never challenged a member government when it nominated an ill-equipped man to a position on the staff, one diplomat said.

WHEN Kurt Waldheim took up his post, in January, 1972, the condition of the United Nations system was one of undisciplined expansion confusedly related to outdated concepts of global trends and inhibited at every turn by an impenetrable bureaucracy. U.N. operations, at headquarters as in the field, were beset by a lack of coherent purpose; by destructive rivalries among proliferating branches and drastic deficiencies of ability within the inflated senior ranks; and by demoralization throughout a staff body enfeebled by the almost complete absence of a merit system. Cynicism and hypocrisy on the part of governments and vested interests were compounded by the absence of salutary pressure from benevolent and academic supporters—an indulgence generally reproduced by well-intended elements of the press.

In the closing years of U Thant's tenure, the deterioration of the U.N. system had given rise to numerous internal studies, increasingly candid in content and urgent in tone, and in several instances drawn up by outside experts at the request of the U.N.'s governing bodies. From 1967 on, a series of secret reports had condemned the administration of the U.N.'s Food and Agriculture Organization, in Rome; and in 1970 a similar scrutiny of UNESCO, in Paris, brought administrative reprisals against employees who voiced support for it. (At UNESCO, in the McCarthy years, administrative violations instigated by the United States and analogous to those occurring at the U.N. headquarters, in New York, had prepared the ground for this organizational chaos, which foreshadowed, in its turn, the perversion of the agency's purposes in the nineteen-seventies and eighties.) In 1969, a massive official "Study of the Capacity of the United Nations Development System," compiled by Sir Robert Jackson, an Australian consultant with United Nations experience, examined, with unprecedented frankness, the U.N.'s extensive programs of economic and social aid to underprivileged lands, and likened the enterprise to "some prehistoric monster." In the summer of 1971, a statement of causes of the demoralization of the United Nations staff was issued at Geneva by the Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations; and a lengthy article on the same theme by the respected former U.N. department head Hugh Keenleyside, appearing in the *Saturday Review*, called attention to "the tragic deterioration of the Secretariat." In July, 1971, shortly before the election of Kurt Waldheim as Secretary-General, an expert group called the Joint Inspection Unit, appointed by the General Assembly to consider aspects of the organization's predicament, released a report on personnel problems at the United Nations, in which a quarter century of administrative disarray was formidably, if incompletely, documented. Over the ensuing fifteen years, this body would continue to report on the U.N. condition.

The findings of these and other such studies were overwhelmingly adverse;

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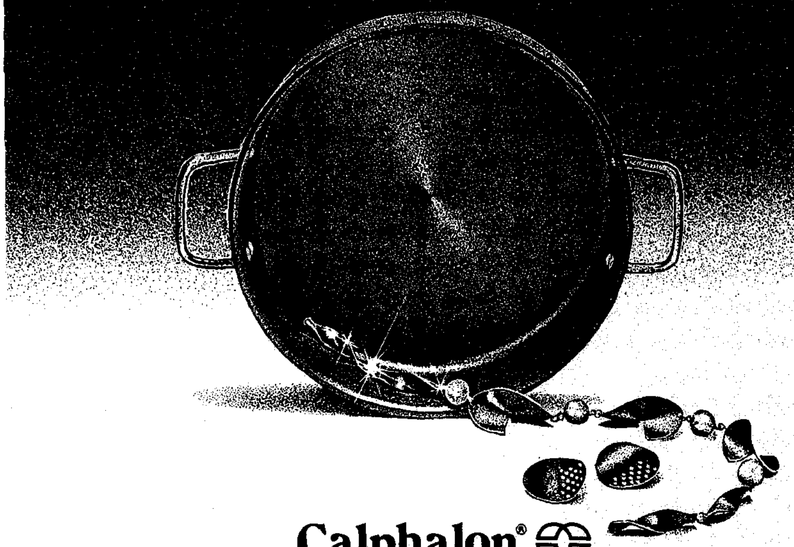

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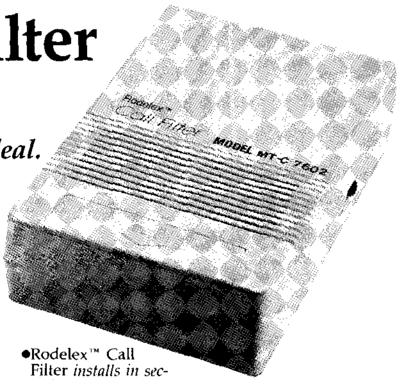

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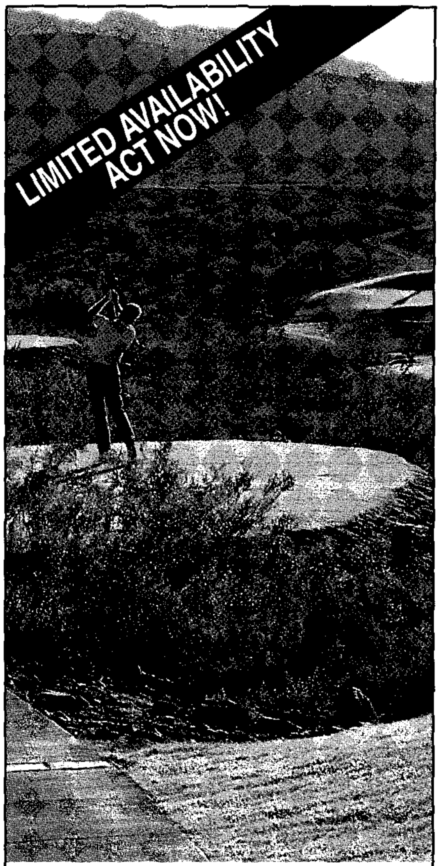

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their compilers emphatically urged immediate and radical reforms. Findings and recommendations alike would be disregarded by the organization's governmental and bureaucratic leaders; but the consequences of a willed disorder, which fatally intensified under Waldheim, had already played their part in the organization's incapacity for understanding or affecting world events.

The capital function for which the United Nations had been created—the prevention of hostilities around the world—had, from the time of Hammarskjöld's death, in September, 1961, lapsed as an active concept at the U.N., replaced by a claim that the organization's usefulness lay in providing a place for national envoys to forgather, and a forum for face-saving rhetoric in the wake of decisions taken elsewhere. The public, however, could not necessarily assume that the leaders of modern nations would find no means of meeting or expressing themselves, when they wished to do so, without the baroque apparatus of the present United Nations; and possibly doubted (since the crucial gestures of great power were consistently made outside the United Nations) the U.N.'s assertion that the organization had by its mere existence been instrumental in averting nuclear conflict—a claim, quite unsupported by facts, that could only be conclusively disproved by the cataclysm itself. During the nineteen-sixties, this profound change—essentially a conversion to passivity—in the organization's declared idea of its political purposes was accomplished almost uncontested; while, for its member states, the United Nations became a place, merely, where governments might, without abating their transgressions, go to church. In the same period, the definition of U.N. "peacekeeping" dwindled from its previous concept of creative intervention, coming to signify, as it does today, not the establishment of peace but, rather, at best, a suspension of long and unresolved hostilities, in which the United Nations and its troops might supervise a precarious truce. This was a falling off from Hammarskjöld's sustained attempt to address the sources of conflict, and to forestall war, with all its attendant ruin.

For most of U Thant's tenure, from 1961 to 1972, the world's attention had been fixed on the last excruciating stage of the thirty years' conflict in Indo-China—the Vietnam War, which the United Nations never seriously addressed. The Secretary-General's undisclosed attempts at mediation of that war had proved ineffectual; and his personal aversion to the conflict, publicly unvoiced, provided no leadership, support, or stature for the worldwide call for its termination or for a growing element of popular rejection, within the world's more stable societies, of the phenomenon of war—a rejection in which the United Nations had its origins. The pattern of U.N. impotence in all emergencies directly involving the superpowers had been emphasized by the peripheral and ritualistic role assigned to the world body during the Cuban missile crisis, of October, 1962; and in August, 1968, when the representatives of Czechoslovakia fruitlessly appealed, as had their Hungarian counterparts in 1956, to the United Nations against Soviet repression. The weakness of the United Nations' performance in hostilities between India and Pakistan in 1965, and, in the early nineteen-seventies, in the prolonged emergency of the new state of Bangladesh, had exposed unresponsiveness in the Secretariat as well as in the U.N.'s political organs. U.N. aloofness from the fratricidal struggle between Nigeria and Biafra, which would cost at least a million lives, prefigured the organization's disengagement from analogous tragedies that would overwhelm Uganda, Burundi, and other African states in the coming decade; and vitiated, with its pall of selective morality, the strength of U.N. pronouncements regarding apartheid in South Africa.

The Secretariat's own lack of standing and influence in these events, its failure to rally the energies of those governments willing to act responsibly, and its insistence on its subjection not only to governmental desires but to their lowest common denominator were absorbed into the public mind with a lingering sediment of disdain. In that context, U Thant's 1967 removal of U.N. forces from the Sinai, shortly before the outbreak of the Six-Day War, appeared to confirm the image of an irresolute institution under an inept and timorous leader.

THE very dangers of world conditions, and growing public apprehension of a wave of violence and disaffection around the earth, offered, in 1972, great opportunities to a new Secretary-General. Many thoughtful citizens were disposed, in their anxiety, to consider remedies of an international and humanitarian character. The war in Asia had impaired America's ability to speak for democratic principle, as she had done since the close of the Second World War. At the United Nations itself, the admission of mainland China to membership, after a twenty-year exclusion at the behest of the United States, signalled—together with the entry of newly independent nations—a modification of American hegemony. The economic might of the United States, with its contingent powers of political compulsion, was, furthermore, no longer unrivalled around the world. An outbreak of authoritarianism had given rise to fresh concern for human and civil rights on the part of groups and individuals in many lands; and the emergence of voluntary agencies protesting, with wide public support, the official practice of torture and unlawful imprisonment threw into relief the United Nations' long abdication from its duties in that field, and its adherence to procedures cruelly and blatantly favoring offending governments. Dissidents—their very names unmentionable in United Nations assemblies—fearlessly coming forward with their testimony in the Soviet Union, Asia, Africa, and Latin America, recalled to the public imagination the power of individual moral courage and endurance, and of articulate truth. All these mutations presented an occasion for loosening the bonds of Secretariat servitude to governments in favor of a new involvement with responsible elements of the public. Within the Secretariat, also, the severe debility reported by the United Nations' own surveys gave a mandate for radical reform.

Kurt Waldheim had not been chosen in order to seize such an opportunity; nor had any of his predecessors in office, although one had—as is recorded—surprised his sponsors. In Waldheim's case, those secret constraints imposed by his concealed past were necessary only to give form to a failure that his character already insured. Uninspired, officious, and essentially trivial, Waldheim was proof against every occasion of a larger kind. A lack of imagination, which indu-

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bitably sustained him in his long deception, precluded any sense of self-absurdity. The satisfaction in "limits" expressed at the time of his appointment extended to his own shortcomings; and as he took office he informed the world, "I'm glad I'm not an intellectual ball of fire. I don't think you can solve the United Nations' problems that way."

An antipathy to distinguished thought and to individual powers of reason and discernment had played a prominent role in the purges of the Secretariat conducted under Trygve Lie—and had been, indeed, a cornerstone of the McCarthyist movement in the United States. In 1953, Henri Hoppenot, the representative of France, had deplored to the General Assembly "a mediocre level of recruitment" at the Secretariat, which had "left deep marks on the administrative habits of the organization." In 1974, in a study highly critical of United Nations recruitment and administrative practices prepared by Seymour Maxwell Finger and John Mugno, of the Ralph Bunche Institute of the City University of New York, U.N. administrators themselves agreed, if anonymously, that the organization has "never hired the cream of the crop," and "has settled perhaps too easily for average quality personnel." This study, which angered Waldheim by its criticisms of his overriding desire to gratify governmental pressures, also noted the unflagging determination of member states to perpetuate the weak condition of the international service:

> Although the Secretary-General and the Secretariat have been less bold since Hammarskjöld's death, representation in the Secretariat, and especially at its highest posts, is still seen by many states as insurance against unwanted Secretariat action on political, economic or social issues, or as an opportunity to prompt the Secretariat to enunciate a particular position on these issues.

Soon after the release of this study, however, a "restructuring" of United Nations economic and social operations, announced in May, 1975, inaugurated an unprecedented increase of new senior posts assigned for geographical distribution. This innovation was hailed by Kurt Waldheim as "historic."

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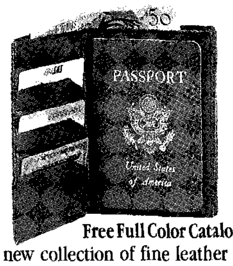

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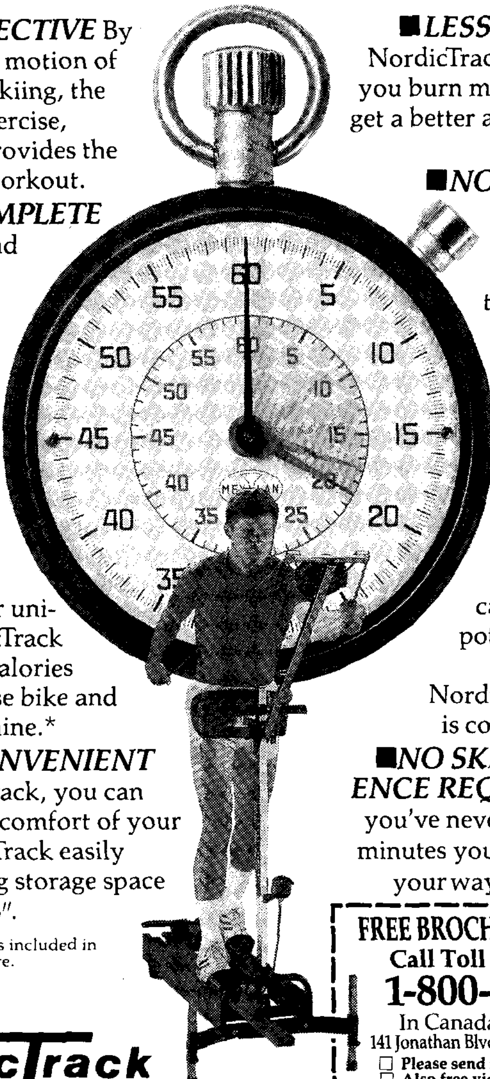
innate limitations provided, in the new year of 1972, a comfortable ambience for Waldheim—as did the larger institutional context of conformity and fear. "The freedom of the mind, the source of every generous and rational sentiment"—in Gibbon's words—"was destroyed by the habits of credulity and submission." Processes of national screening and the compilation of secret United Nations dossiers had, together with other forms of intimidation and reprisal, now been at work on U.N. personnel for a quarter century, in violation of the Charter—and it is perfectly indicative of the U.N. paradox that thousands of useless and defamatory files should have been maintained by the administration as a weapon against its staff while throughout the nineteen-seventies the Secretary-General's own history lay unconsulted in public records and in the War Crimes archive of the United Nations itself. (More striking still is the fact that the machinery of "clearance," established by governments to sift and expose eccentricities in the staff body, should have shown itself entirely and willfully ineffectual in the case of the organization's leader.) The Secretariat had clogged its upper and intermediate ranks with bureaucrats and politicians transplanted or on loan from national administrations, at the expense of independent candidates who had breathed the free air of private life and would have refreshed the institution with diversity and a sense of proportion. The almost complete absence of competitive examinations or other objective standards reflected the fact that admission to and advancement within the international civil service were controlled by improper extraneous factors. In 1971, the Joint Inspection Unit had recorded the "remarkable fact that a very large number of Professional staff have never attended a university," adding that "more than 25 per cent seem never to have attended an establishment of higher education."

The clear provisions of the United Nations Charter for the creation of a rational and distinguished career service had been, with the Secretariat's complicity, completely set aside. The international civil service, as a coherent entity, had never come into being. Nor, under its prevailing leadership, could it do so. —SHIRLEY HAZZARD

(This is the first part of a two-part article.)



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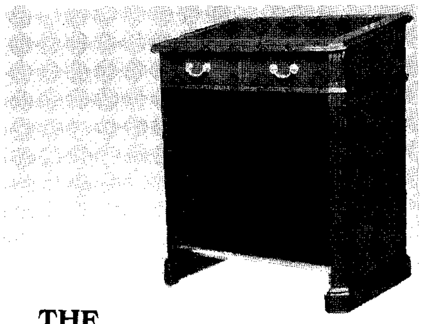

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SINCE 1975, when Glynn Ross, the first director of the Seattle Opera, inaugurated the Pacific Northwest Wagner Festival, Seattle has been a place of Wagnerian pilgrimage. There, and in no other American city, cycles of the "Ring" were presented annually for a decade. In 1981, there was an imaginative production of "Tristan," with projected scenery. In 1985, Mr. Ross's successor, Speight Jenkins, inaugurated a new "Ring" with a controversial "Walküre," directed by François Rochaix and designed by Robert Israel, and the next year he brought it to completion. "Tannhäuser" (in 1984) and "The Flying Dutchman" (earlier this year) have also been done. ("Lohengrin" has not been seen in Seattle since 1967, and the company has not tackled "Parsifal.") The Seattle Opera House, a legacy of the 1962 Fair, is set on the edge of a park and is reached from downtown by monorail. Although much bigger than Bayreuth—it holds over three thousand people, against Bayreuth's eighteen hundred—it has warm, aptly Wagnerian acoustics and a shape that directs attention firmly toward the stage. And the orchestra—drawn from the Seattle Symphony—has over the years become a band of versed Wagnerians.

The Seattle "Ring," last seen in 1987, is due for revival in 1991. This summer brought seven performances of "Die Meistersinger," described as the first uncut new production in this country for a quarter century. (New York City Opera, San Francisco, and Portland presentations during the period were abridged; the Met did the opera at full length but in an old staging.) Mr. Rochaix directed. Hermann Michael, who conducted the 1984 "Tannhäuser" and the 1987 "Ring," conducted. Roger Roloff and Julian Patrick, Seattle's Wotan and Alberich, played Hans Sachs and Beckmesser. This "Meistersinger" was billed as the company's biggest production ever, with a hundred and eighty performers onstage, and over three hundred costumes. It was not grandiose. It was a lively, attractive presentation, freshly thought, well integrated; and although I did not admire everything about it I gladly attended two performances (with different casting in three main roles).

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Worst first. Jean-Claude Maret's costumes, several of them executed in shiny stuffs, did nothing for the singers and little for the opera. Walther von Stolzing, in a short dress with a pleated skirt and short puffy oversleeves, without boots to conceal thick legs, suggested the Fat Woman of Brainford rather than a dashing knight. Eva was glitzy in gold and white. (The original 1868 costume had those colors, it is true, but was quite differently cut. In Seattle, Eva's line "My dress may flatter me" won a laugh.) Hans Sachs in Act III was got up as a spangled Harlequin in black and electric blue. Kothner and Beckmesser were apparently rabbis. Mr. Maret's sets, in themselves light, simple, and not unpleasing, moved about in midscene, and this told against the basic stage imagery of old Nuremberg stability, of the town's resistance to new ideas. "Die Meistersinger," harmonically, melodically, formally, verbally—in every way—is about the reconciliation of the new with the old, about iconoclasm like that of "Tristan" brought into harmony with and enriching the old harmonies. Sachs' *Fliedermonolog* lies at the heart of the opera: pages of chromatic reflection in uneven periods as the cobbler muses on the strange new song that will not leave his mind, crowned by eight shining, affirmative bars in unclouded F major as he declares that, whatever others may think of the song, he thoroughly approves it. For the rich, stirring opera to "speak," sensitive musical and dramatic characterization is enough. Realistic scenery can serve it well but is not obligatory. Wieland Wagner's great Bayreuth production—first seen in 1956, the following year refined—played in romantic abstractions of church, street, workshop, and festival meadow, but the essential symbolism was retained: Riemenschneider evocations in Act I, a glimmering tracery of house outlines in Act II provided emblems of old Nuremberg; lime tree and elder breathed fragrance through the dense blue dusk of the second scene. In Mr. Rochaix's production, which was largely traditional, there were novelties that jarred, that seemed senseless. In the mainly realistic context, a Walther who kept his hat on in church appeared more underbred than revolutionary, and so did a Walther who drew his sword on David, and then on the mastersingers when they mocked his trial song, instead of saving the strong gesture for the close of Act II, when he must cut his way through a quarrelling crowd.

Setting the *Fliedermonolog* indoors, in Sachs' workroom—not out beneath the elder tree, in the calm, beautiful evening—was unpoetic and perverse. Sachs' cherished folio in which he scans *Stadt- und Welt-Chronik* was reduced to a few looseleaf sheets in a folder. (Was the intention to suggest a shallow, pretentious fellow? If so, the character that Wagner created had been misunderstood.) In the final scene, Beckmesser slunk back on, after his humiliation, to hear how the Prize Song of which he had just made such a hash should really be sung. (This is rather touching. Listeners often feel sorrier for Beckmesser than Wagner seems to do; I feel very sorry for him when at the close of Act II he leaves dragging behind him a precious lute that has been pounded to pieces in the melee. But directors who decide to "correct" Wagner in an endeavor to win sympathy for Beckmesser surely forget that it was Wagner himself, within the opera as he wrote it, who created the feelings that they feel.) Toward the very end—in Seattle, as in Wolfgang Wagner's Bayreuth production—Beckmesser was brought to prominence. (And that seems to me a mishearing of the music, an intolerable "correction" of a drama better left alone by the director who feels that Wagner was so incompetent a dramatist as to need radical revision but who is not prepared or equipped to recompose the score to fit his perceptions.) The third-act procession of the masters advanced through the house itself toward the people waiting for them onstage, and the audience cheered along with the stage crowd. (That struck me as an acceptable and effective innovation: Seattle and Nuremberg spectators were drawn into one audience for Sachs' address. One might even take hings a step further: teach the audience the words and music of the chorale "Wach' auf," so that all can oin in.)

Though some things were distressng, much was right. Mr. Roloff is a good singer, an excellent singer. His ocus is pure; his tone is forward and beautiful, never forced; and his words

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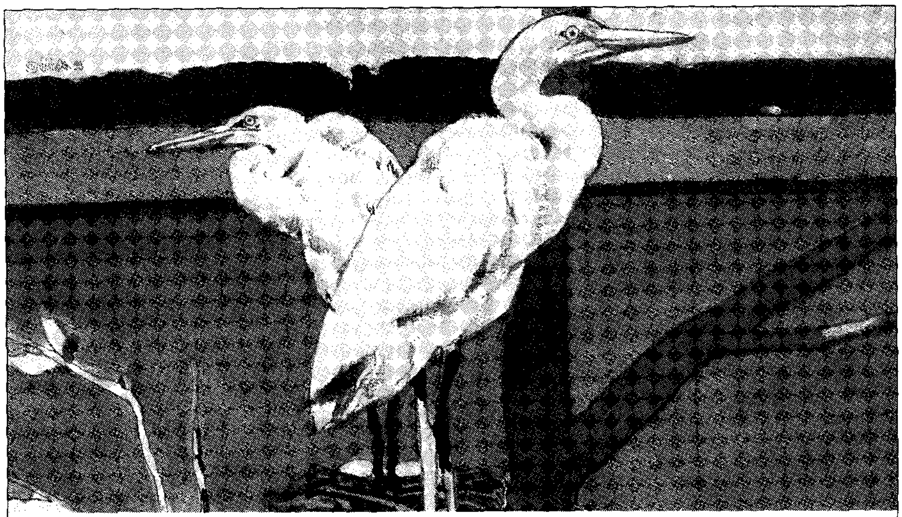

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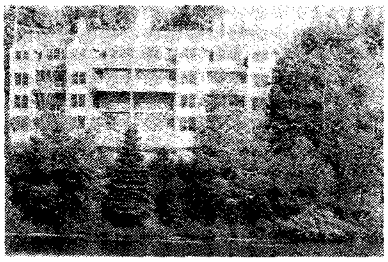

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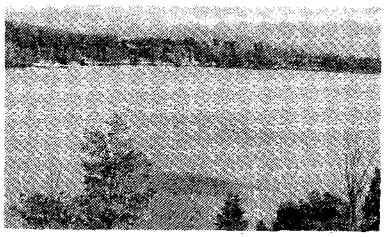

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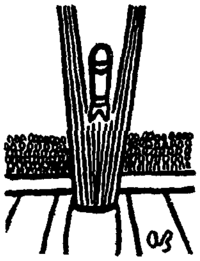
are clear. He is one of the most promising heroic baritones of our day. For years, I have been admiring him—and hoping that to vocal prowess he would add stage presence. In Seattle, he had not yet done so. He played Sachs with a well-nigh unchanging benevolent smile and quizzical glance. Perhaps one day he and Peter Sellars will meet, and he will be urged to act with his eyes and his body as well as his voice. His mind does seem to be engaged: many a phrase was subtly and tellingly inflected. He was a vocal presence but a dramatic cipher. His alternate, Stephen West, moved the house to a standing ovation with a fine, big voice and a generous, outgoing personality. His was a confident if more generalized portrayal. He, too, is promising.



The first Eva was Helen Donath, the second Carol Yahr. Miss Donath, who recorded Eva for Karajan twenty years ago, sounded wonderfully fresh, sure, and youthful of timbre. She was charming, a shade conventional, an able if not particularly interesting performer. Miss Yahr, hitherto a mezzo, was more arresting, with ideas about the character, but she was readier to push her tones rather than let them flow easily. The first Walther von Stolzing was Ben Heppner, the young Canadian tenor who caught ear and eye as Walther von der Vogelweide in Mr. Sellars' Chicago production of "Tannhäuser." Apt progress: the "Meistersinger" Walther declares the "Tannhäuser" Walther to have been his teacher. I enjoyed Mr. Heppner's free, easy singing, his good German, his sense of what he was about. Incisive words, clean sound, and the ability to lift lyrically into the peak of phrases did much to transcend the unromantic appearance and the oafish behavior that Mr. Maret and Mr. Rochaix had prescribed for him. His alternate, Erwin Stephan, was passable.

Mr. Patrick was a winning Beckmesser, a rounded character, with every tic, every fussy little gesture and aggrieved inflection in place but not caricatured. Moreover, he was a mastersinger who, even where Wagner assigned him absurdities to sing, rendered them with vocal art that showed why Beckmesser was an honored member of the guild. James Hoback, the David, had charm of presence and manner even when, needlessly loud, he pushed his tones beyond the limits of charm. (He lit his master's lantern, it seemed, with a kind of match that was invented only in the early nineteenth century.) Birgitta Svendén, who had been an inappropriately flighty young Erda in the Met "Ring," was a captivating young Magdalene. John Del Carlo, the Kothner, had good coloratura. From Alan Held, the Nightwatchman's ten-o'clock call rang boldly. He used the eleven-o'clock call for another straightforward display of his powerful bass; here Wagner wanted the Nightwatchman to rub his eyes and sing "with a gently quavering voice."

Seattle has one of the best opera choruses in the country, trained by George Fiore, and in "Die Meistersinger" it shone. At the Met, in San Francisco, at Covent Garden, in Munich, in Bayreuth itself, the choral writing of Wagner's second-act finale is habitually simplified. The composer's careful instructions for here a solo voice, there two, four, eight voices on a line are not observed; everybody sings everything. It makes things more secure. But Seattle opted to perform what Wagner wrote. I won't pretend that had I not known this in advance I would have noticed it: too much is going on at the time. Alerted, I certainly did hear unwonted choral transparency and variety. And, incidentally, saw the admirable choristers acting with more security and naturalness than did some of the principals in this busy, difficult scene.

Mr. Michael's conducting seemed fleet. Some thought it rather fast. The usual duration of "Die Meistersinger" is four hours and between fifteen and thirty minutes of music. Hans Knappertsbusch's four hours forty minutes, in 1952, is the longest in the Bayreuth annals. (Reginald Goodall, with the Sadler's Wells Opera in 1968, took well over five hours, and made the Guinness Book of World Records thereby.) Christof Perick's 1985 Me "Meistersinger" lasted four hours and fourteen minutes. In Seattle, Mr Michael, at four hours and twenty-four minutes, was well within traditional limits. He was never heavy, seldom emphatic, always vigilant. The opera moved well and seemed not at al long. —ANDREW PORTE

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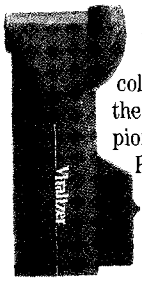

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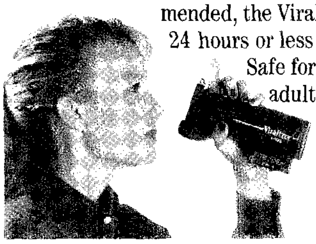

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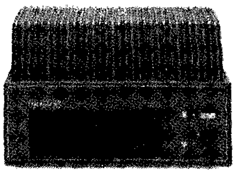

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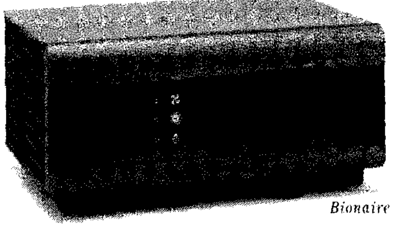

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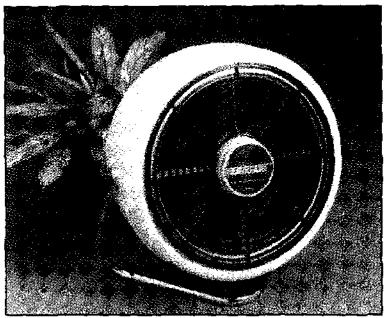

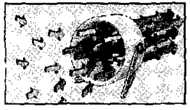

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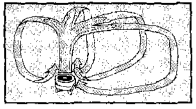

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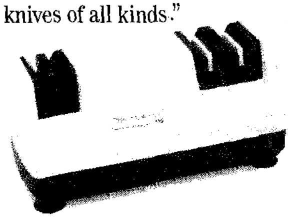

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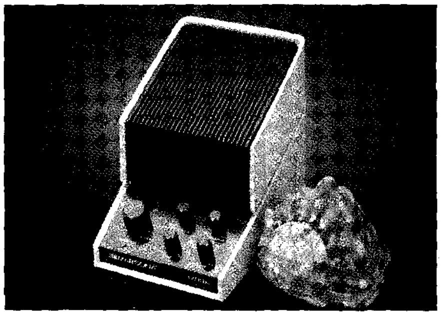

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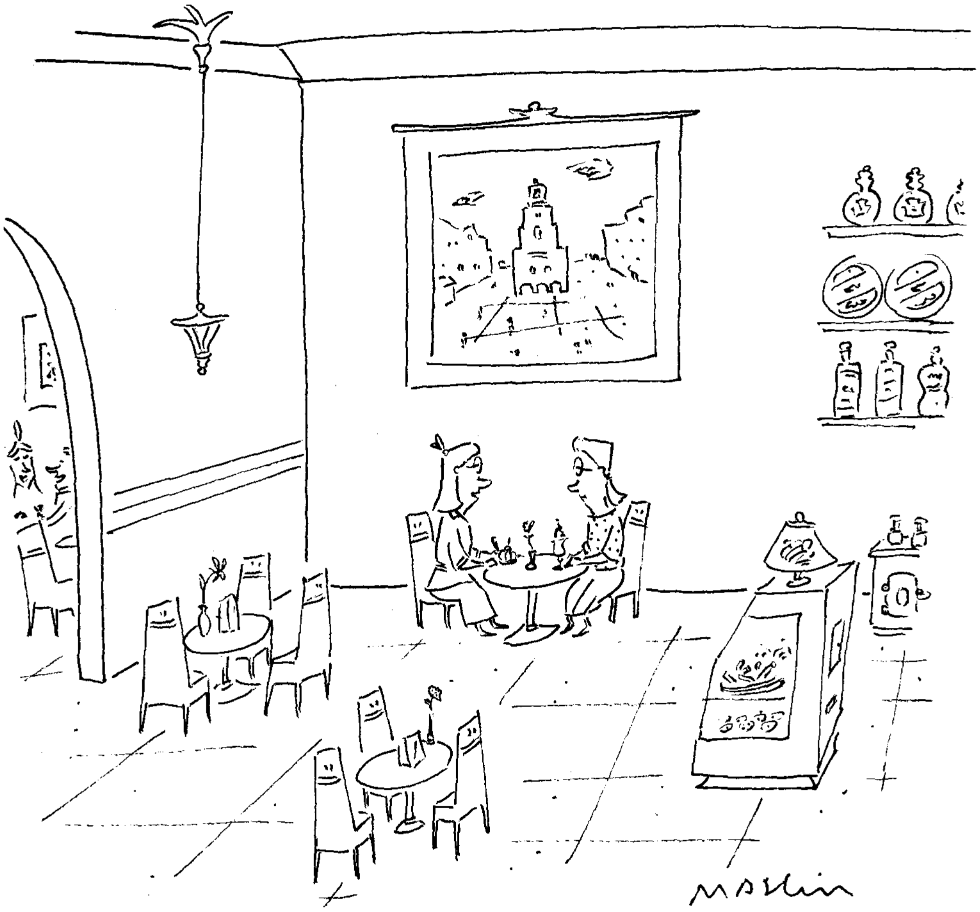
> The human predicament is typically so complex that it is not altogether clear which lies are vital and what truths beg for discovery.—"*Vital Lies, Simple Truths: The Psychology of Self-Deception,*" *by Daniel Goleman.*

I GUESS most people found it hard to believe that Elvis Presley didn't die after all but instead is alive and well and shopping at Felpausch's Supermarket, in Vicksburg, Michigan. I know I did when I read about it in the New York *Times* last fall. The *Times* wasn't on record as saying, "THE KING LIVES," or anything like that, but it did report that a Vicksburg woman named Louise Welling had said she'd seen him the year before, in the supermarket's checkout line. Her sighting encouraged Elvins everywhere, many of whom believe that Presley faked his death. It also added an extra fillip to Elvismania, which is part nostalgia and part industry, the industry part consisting of the production of Elvis memorabilia, books, articles, tours, and prime-time TV "docudramas." Fans have made periodic demands for an Elvis postage stamp, and a multimedia musical—"Elvis: A Rockin' Remembrance"—had an Off-Broadway run this summer.

Promotion was what made Elvis Presley. In 1977, the year of his death, his likeness was more widely reproduced than any other save that of Mickey Mouse, and it has been reported that the news of his demise was greeted by one cynic with the words "Good career move!" According to Albert Goldman, the biographer who tells this story, Presley was by then a porky, aging, drug-befuddled Las Vegas entertainer and was getting to be a hard personality to promote. The Presley image shorn of the troublesome real man was easier to market. For example, after the King's death, Presley's manager, Colonel Thomas A. Parker, contracted with a vineyard in Paw Paw, Michigan—a town not far from Vicksburg—to produce a wine called Always Elvis. Its label bears a head shot of the entertainer, in a high-collared spangled white shirt, singing into a hand-held microphone. Colonel Parker's own four-stanza poem appears on the back of the bottle. Goldman has computed that the poem earned Parker twenty-eight thousand dollars in royalties, "making him, line for line, the best-paid poet in the world." Although the wine is no longer produced, I was able to find a dusty old bottle in my local liquor store. In the interests of journalism, I sampled it. It was an adequate companion to the poem, which closes with the couplet

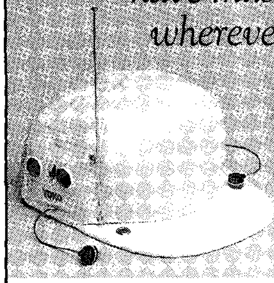
> We will play your songs from day to day
> For you really never went away.

In its year-end double issue, *People* ran a story featuring recent photographs of Elvis purportedly taken by readers around the country, each picture as vague and tantalizing as snapshots of the Loch Ness monster. While debate mounted over whether or not Elvis Presley was still alive, I got stuck back there in the part of the *Times* story which said that he was shopping at Felpausch's. By the latter part of the nineteen-fifties, when Elvis arrived to sweep away the dreariness of the Eisenhower years, I was too old to respond to the Dionysian sexual appeal that he had for his teen-age maenads; consequently, I was also unmoved by retro-Elvis. But I did grow up near Vicksburg. My family lived in Kalamazoo, a bigger town (in which Elvis was also said to have appeared) twelve miles to the north, and we spent our summers at a lake near Vicksburg. My widowed mother now lives at the lake the year round, and when I visit her I often shop at Felpausch's myself. I know Vicksburg tolerably well, so when I read the account in the *Times* I strongly suspected that the reporter had been snookered by a group of the guys over at Mar-Jo's Café, on Main Street, half a block from Felpausch's, which is on Prairie Street, the town's other commer-



"Yes, I'm still seeing Jay, and yes, I'm still trying to pierce his armor."

"And you shall have music wherever you go!"



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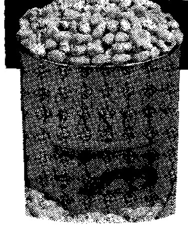

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cial thoroughfare. Last June, while I was visiting my mother, I decided to drive into Vicksburg and find out what I could about the Elvis Presley story.

VICKSBURG is a pretty village of two thousand people, more or less. A hundred and fifty years ago, when it was first settled by white people, the land was prairie and oak forest. James Fenimore Cooper, who lived for a time in the nearby town of Schoolcraft, wrote about the area in his book "Oak Openings." It is in southern Michigan, where the winters are long and gray, and even the earliest settlers complained of the ferocity of the summertime mosquitoes. Vicksburg's one-block commercial section has been spruced up in recent years. There are beds of petunias at the curb edges, and new façades on the nineteenth-century buildings. The carefully maintained Victorian houses on the side streets are shaded by maples big enough to make you think elm. A paper mill, built near a dam that the eponymous John Vickers constructed on Portage Creek for his flour mill, has long provided employment for the local people, but today the village has become something of a bedroom community for commuters to Kalamazoo. Still, it seems very like the place I knew when I used to come to band concerts on Wednesday evenings at the corner of Main and Prairie, during the summers of the nineteen-thirties and forties. The band concerts are a thing of the past, but there are other homegrown entertainments, such as one going on the week I was there—the annual Vicksburg Old Car Festival, which is run by Skip Knowles, a local insurance man. The festival has a fifties theme, and last year, inspired by the commotion that Louise Welling's sighting of Elvis had produced, Knowles added an Elvis-look-alike contest to the roster of events. Knowles has his office in a storefront on Main Street which used to be Matz's Confectionery, where I first discovered lime phosphates (known locally as "green rivers").

And the teen-agers are still bored. While I was in the library going through back issues of local newspapers, two high-school girls introduced themselves to me, saying that they had lived in Vicksburg all their lives and would be happy to talk to me about it. I asked them what they thought about

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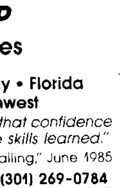

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Elvis Presley. They smiled patronizingly and informed me that no one they knew paid any attention to him. "But *everything* just stands still in Vicksburg," one of them confided. "We go to Kalamazoo on Saturday nights. I can't wait to get out of here and go to college."

Mar-Jo's has stayed the same, too. It has been in the same place for forty years. It was named after Marge Leitner and her partner, Josephine, whose last name no one at the café can remember. It is your basic tan place: tan floor, tan walls, tan tables, tan counter. The sign taped to the cash register was new to me. It said:

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But the men having coffee together at the big round table near the front windows could have been the same ones sitting there the last time I was in, which was a couple of years ago.

"How's you-know-who?" gray crewcut asks feed-store cap. "Don't see her anymore."

The others guffaw, and one says, "He's taken her clothes."

"What clothes?" feed-store cap shoots back. A ripple of caffeine-fuelled laughter circles the table.

Shirley White, a small, wiry woman, has been a waitress at Mar-Jo's for eleven years. Her hair is dark and tightly curled. She is efficient and cheerful. She knows virtually all her customers by name and how they like their coffee, and she banters with all of them. She gets to work at four-forty-five every morning, so she is usually way ahead of the best of the town wits, giving as good as she gets. The coffee-club boys once arranged the kind of prank on her that made me suspect them of the Elvis Presley caper. One of the regulars was a big man whom she could deftly unsettle with a clever phrase or two. His invariable riposte was a mumbled "Paybacks are hell." A few years ago, he was on vacation in Florida when her birthday came around, and she had nearly forgotten about him. Mar-Jo's was jammed that day, and no one would tell her why. "Just as I was busiest, this really big monkey walked in," she told me. "At least, it was a big guy dressed in a

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monkey costume, and he kept following me around, getting in my way. I was real embarrassed, and everyone kept laughing. Then a messenger handed me something called an Ape-O-Gram. It had just three words: 'Paybacks are hell.' "

Nearly all the coffee drinkers thought that the Elvis Presley sighting was as funny as the Ape-O-Gram, but no one would own up to having had a hand in making up the story. Louise Welling, it seemed, was a real person, and well known in town. She lived to the east, a few miles outside the village, they told me. "She's different, that's for sure," one of the coffee drinkers said. "No one believes her about Elvis Presley, but we all enjoyed it. Kind of put Vicksburg on the map. Isn't it funny? Elvis Presley wasn't even a very good singer. But I don't think Louise thinks it's funny." They referred me to a woman in town who knew Louise Welling better than they did and lived not far from her.

I went over to see the woman, who had an office in town, and talked to her with the understanding that her name would not be used. "Yes," she said. "I guess you could say that Louise is different. Her whole family is different, except for her husband, who works at General Motors. He's real quiet. But she's not crazy or anything. In fact, I think she's real bright. I don't know what to make of her claim that she saw Elvis Presley. She was a big Elvis fan from way back, but she doesn't bring him up or talk about this stuff unless someone asks her. She's a kind woman. She's reliable, too, and I wouldn't hesitate to call her if I had trouble. I'm afraid that after the story came out a lot of people played jokes on her. Made Elvis phone calls. Sent her Elvis letters. I'm pretty sure she's not in it for money. She just seems to think it's an interesting story, and it makes her mad when people don't believe her. Of course, none of us do. I don't know anyone in this town who thinks she really saw Elvis Presley. She was furious with the Vicksburg newspaper because they wouldn't run her story."

IT seemed odd to me that the Vicksburg *Commercial* had not used Louise Welling's story—a story that had made the New York *Times*—so I called up Jackie Lawrence, the owner of the *Commercial*, and asked her to meet me for lunch at Mar-Jo's. Jackie Lawrence, a former nurse, is a big woman with curly brown hair, and she smiles a lot when she talks about Vicksburg, her adopted town. There are, she said, perhaps a dozen loyal Elvis fans in town—people who make pilgrimages to Graceland and would *like* to believe Louise Welling even if they don't.

We studied the daily specials, which were posted on the wall, and I decided to order Ken's Homemade Goulash. Next to the list of specials were snapshots of Ken Fowler, a cheerful young man with a fine brushy mustache, who bought Mar-Jo's two years ago and does a lot of the café's cooking. Shortly after he bought the place, he had a birthday, and the regulars, the waitresses, and Ken's wife conspired to bring in a belly dancer. The event was captured on film, and the posted snapshots show Ken, in apparent embarrassment, on a chair in one corner of the café, surrounded by laughing customers as a woman in gold draperies writhes in front of him.

Jackie Lawrence told me that she remembered Louise Welling coming into the newspaper office, which is a few doors down from Mar-Jo's, in March, 1988, six months after the sighting at Felpausch's. At the time of her visit, Mrs. Welling knew that her story would soon be printed nationally, in the *Weekly World News*—and so it was, three months later. (According to Jim Leggett, who is the dean of free-lance tabloid photojournalists and once schemed to drill a hole in Howard Hughes' coffin in order to photograph his face, the *Weekly World News* is not exactly esteemed in the trade. "It prints the flotsam left by the better tabloids," he told me.) Mrs. Welling had wanted the *Commercial* to run her story first, Lawrence said. "She stood right by my desk, trying to tell me all about it. I said to her, 'I'm sorry, I don't have time for this,' and showed her out the door. And if she came in again, I'd say the same thing."

There was only one mention in the *Commercial* of the stir caused by Louise Welling's encounter with Elvis. The winner of Skip Knowles' 1988 Elvis-look-alike contest, a truck driver named Ray Kajkowski, came into the newspaper office a few days after the event to ask for prints of any pictures that might have been taken. While he was there, he kissed Jean Delahanty, one of the *Commercial's* reporters, and she wrote a column about it, which

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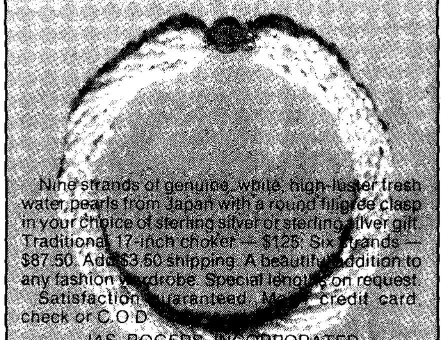

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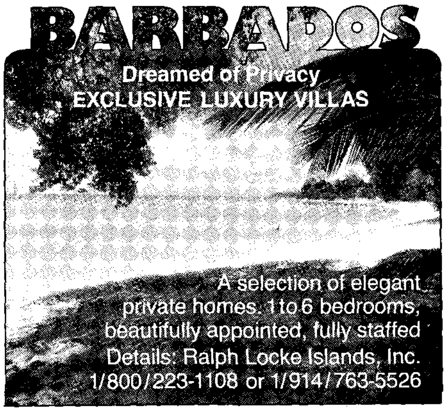

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concluded, "Some days are better than others!"

There is no chamber of commerce, as such, in Vicksburg. The town doesn't need one; it has Skip Knowles. I had telephoned Knowles before coming to Vicksburg. "Give me a jingle when you get in," he said. "Maybe we can do lunch." He is a handsome, trim, dark-haired man, and at our lunch a gold chain showed through the open collar of his shirt. There was another gold chain around his wrist. He was born in Atchison, Kansas, he told me, but spent his teen-age years—from 1962 to 1968—near Detroit, where he developed a passion for cars and for cruising, that cool, arm-on-the-window, slow patrolling of city streets which was favored by the young in those days. His dark eyes sparkled at the memory.

"We had what we called the Woodward Timing Association," he said. "It was made up of the guys that cruised Woodward Avenue. The Elias Big Boy at Thirteen Mile Road and Woodward was the place we'd go. But you know how the grass is always greener somewhere else? Well, my ultimate dream was to cruise the Sunset Strip. It wasn't until I got married, in 1969, and went out to California that I got to do that. And I talked to those guys cruising the Strip, and you know what they told me? It was *their* dream to cruise Woodward." He shook his head and laughed. "My wife and I still cruise when we go to a city." He hoped the local people had got cruising down pat for this year's festival, he said, handing me a packet of publicity material and a schedule of festival events. "I had to *teach* them how to cruise last year, which was the first time we closed off the streets for it."

The second annual Elvis-look-alike contest would be held at 9 P.M. Saturday, over on Prairie Street, in the parking lot of the Filling Station, a fast-food restaurant across the street from Felpausch's. Skip Knowles knew a good thing when he had it. Before last summer, he said, the festival had been drawing several thousand people, but each year he had had more trouble getting good publicity. "I can't understand the way they handled the Elvis business over at Felpausch's," he told me. "They even refused an interview with the New York *Times*. But I decided to play it for whatever it was worth."

After the first Elvis-look-alike contest, Knowles received a lot of calls from Louise Welling, who wanted to talk about Elvis Presley with him. "I put her off," he said. "She's *really* different. I think she really believes Presley never died." He also received other phone calls and visits. When his secretary told him last fall that a reporter from the *Times* was in his outer office waiting to talk to him, he thought it was just a hoax—a joke like the ones dreamed up at Mar-Jo's. But when he came out the man introduced himself as the paper's Chicago bureau chief and interviewed him about the Elvis contest. Then a producer from Charles Kuralt's show, "Sunday Morning," called and said he was interested in doing a segment for the show on the impact of the Elvis sighting in Vicksburg, and would anything be going on in Vicksburg around Thanksgiving time? "I told him, 'Look, I'll do *anything* to get you here,' " Knowles recalled. " 'If you want me to rent Cadillac limos and parade them up and down Main Street for you to film, I'll get them.' But the TV people never came."

I DECIDED that it was time to talk to Louise Welling herself. I couldn't make an appointment with hei by telephone, because she had recentl obtained an unlisted number, but on midweek morning I took a chance or finding her at home and drove out t see her. The Wellings live in th country, in a modest split-level hous on non-split-level terrain; this is th sandy, flat part of Michigan, too fa south for the ice-age glaciers to hav sculpted it. Mrs. Welling sometime works as a babysitter, but this mornin she was home, along with four of he five children—all of them grown– and Nathan, her four-year-old grandson. Mrs. Welling is a heavyse woman with closely cropped dark hai and a pleasant face. Her eyes stay sa when she smiles. She touched my arr frequently as we talked, and often interrupted herself to digress as she tol me her story. She said that she grew u in Kalamazoo and for a time attende St. Mary's, a Catholic grammar schoc there. When she turned sixteen, sh was given a special present—a ticket t a Presley concert in Detroit. "Somehow, the fellow who took tickets didn take mine, so after the first show I wa able to move up, and I sat in front during the second," she said. "And then, toward the end, Elvis got down on his knee right in front of me and spread his arms wide open. Well, you can imagine what *that* would be like for a sixteen-year-old girl." Her voice trailed off, and she fell silent, smiling.

I asked her if she had continued to follow his career.

"When I got married, I started having children, and I never thought much about Elvis," she said. "After all, I had problems of my own." But then, in 1973, she saw a notice in a throwaway shopping newspaper from Galesburg, a nearby town, saying that Presley would be in Kalamazoo and, although he would not be performing, would stay at the Columbia Hotel there.

"I didn't try to get in touch with him," Mrs. Welling said, adding, with a womanly smile, "I had a husband, and you know how that is." Three years later, however, Presley appeared in concert in Kalamazoo, and she sent flowers to him at the Columbia Hotel, because she assumed that he would be staying there again. She went to the concert, too, and, as she remembers it, Elvis announced in the course of it that he had a relative living in Vicksburg. 'He said he liked this area," she recalled. "Kalamazoo is a peaceful place. He'd like that. And I think he's living at the Columbia right now, under another name. But they won't admit it here. Every time I call, I get a runaround. You know what I think? I hink he has become an undercover agent. He was interested in that sort of hing."

"What year was it that you saw him n concert in Detroit?" I asked. I had ead somewhere that Presley had not tarted touring outside the South until 956.

"Oh, I don't remember," Mrs. Welling said. "I'm fifty-one now, and I had just turned sixteen—you figure it ut."

The arithmetic doesn't work out—or, for someone who grew up in Kalamazoo, does the Columbia Hotel. The Columbia had its days of glory etween the First World War and Prohibition, and it was growing seedy y the forties, when I used to ride by it n my way to school. Its decline connued after I left Kalamazoo, until—ccording to Dan Carter, one of the artners in a development company

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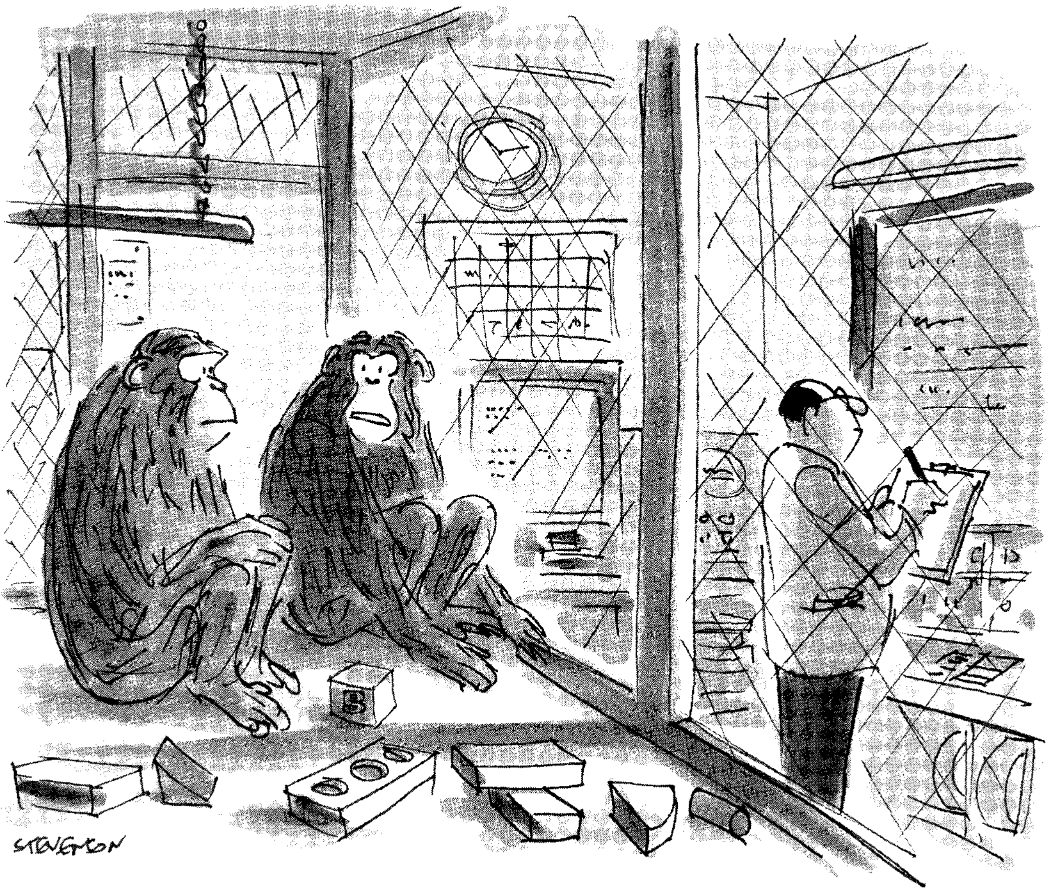

"He's pretty good at rote categorization and single-object relational tasks, but he's not so hot at differentiating between representational and associational signs, and he's very *weak on syntax."*

• •

that remodelled the hotel to create an office complex called Columbia Plaza—it became "a fleabag flophouse and, for a while, a brothel." Carter also told me that in the mid-eighties a rumor arose that Elvis Presley was living there, behind the grand pink double doors on the mezzanine, which open into what was once a ballroom. The doors have been locked for years—the empty ballroom, its paint peeling, belongs to the man who owns Bimbo's Pizza, on the floor below—but that didn't deter Elvins here and abroad from making pilgrimages to Columbia Plaza. "You'd hear foreign voices out in the hallway almost every day," he said. "Then there was a visit from some people from Graceland—at least, they told us they were from Graceland, and they looked the part—who came by to see if we were making any money off this." They weren't, he said, and today the building's management denies that Elvis Presley, under any name, lives anywhere on the premises.

Mrs. Welling's next good look at Elvis Presley came at Felpausch's, in September, 1987. There had been, she told me, earlier hints. In 1979, she had seen a man in the back of the county sheriff's car when the police came to her house to check on the family's dog, which had nipped a jogger. "The man in the back seat was all slouched down, and he didn't look well," she said. "I'm sure it was Elvis." A few years later, black limousines began to appear occasionally on the road where she lives. "Now, who around here would have a limo?" she asked. Then she began seeing a man she believes was Elvis in disguise. "He looked real fake," she recalled. "He was wearing new bib overalls, an Amish hat, and a beard that didn't look real. I talked to a woman who had seen the same man, and she said he sometimes wore a false nose. Now, why does he have to bother with disguises? Why couldn't he have said that he needed a rest, and gone off to some island to get better?"

A note of exasperation had crept into Mrs. Welling's voice. She showed me a cassette that she said contained a tape that Presley made after he was supposed to have died; in it, she said, he explained why he had faked his death. But when she played it the sound was blurred and rumbly, and I couldn't make out the words. The tape had been issued in 1988, to accompany a book by a woman—with whom Mrs. Welling has corresponded—who put forward the theory that the body buried as Presley's was not his own. The book and another by the same author, which Welling said was a fictional account of a rock star who fakes his death, were lovingly inscribed ("It's hard to take the heat") to Mrs. Welling.

Here is what Mrs. Welling said happened to her in September, 1987. She had just been to eleven-o'clock Sunday Mass at St. Martin's Church. With grandson Nathan, she stopped at Felpausch's to pick up a few groceries. Having just celebrated one publicly accepted miracle, she saw nothing strange in the private miracle at the supermarket.

"The store was just about deserted," she said. "There wasn't even anyone at the checkout register when I went in. But back in the aisles I felt and heard someone behind me. It must have been Elvis. I didn't turn around, though. And then, when I got up to the checkout, a girl was there waiting on Elvis. He seemed kind of nervous. He was wearing a white motorcycle suit and carrying a helmet. He bought something little—fuses, I think, not groceries. I was so startled I just looked at him. I knew it was Elvis. When you see someone, you know who he is. I didn't say anything, because I'm kind of shy and I don't speak to people unless they speak first. After I paid for the groceries, I went out to the parking lot, but no one was there."

I asked Mrs. Welling if she had told anyone at the time what she had seen. She replied that she had told no one except the author of the Elvis-isn't dead book, who was "very supportive."

After that, she and her daughter Linda started seeing Elvis in Kalamazoo—once at a Burger King, once at the Crossroads Shopping Mall, and once driving a red Ferrari. And she said that just recently, while she was babysitting and filling her time by listening to the police scanner, she heard a man's voice ask, "Can you give me a time for the return of Elvis?" and heard Presley reply, "I'm here now."

I asked her what her family thought about her experiences. Linda, a pale, blond woman who was sitting off to one side in a dining alcove smoking cigarettes while I talked to her mother, was obviously a believer, and occasionally she interjected reports of various Elvis contacts of her own. "But *my* mother thinks it's all nutty," Mrs. Welling said, laughing. "She says I should forget about it. My husband doesn't say much—he's real quiet—but he knows I'm not crazy."

It wasn't until the spring of 1988, Mrs. Welling said, that she started getting in touch with the media. She claims that she didn't bother talking to the people at the Vicksburg newspaper (although Jackie Lawrence remembers otherwise), because "it wasn't an important newspaper." Instead, she tried to tell her story to the Kalamazoo *Gazette* and people at the television station there. No one would take her seriously—except, of course, the author of the Elvis book. After Mrs. Welling had written to her and talked to her on the telephone, a writer for the *Weekly World News* phoned for an interview. Mrs. Welling asked him how he knew about her, but he declined to reveal his sources. In early May, the tabloid prepared the ground for Mrs. Welling's story by running one that took note of the rumor that Presley was living in Columbia Plaza, and gave Mrs. Welling's friend a nice plug for her book. Shortly after that, he syndicated columnist Bob Greene gave the rumor a push. By that time, he Kalamazoo *Gazette* realized that it could no longer ignore Mrs. Welling's phone calls, and in its May 15th issue Tom Haroldson, a staff writer, wrote a front-page story headlined " 'ELVIS ALIVE' IN KALAMAZOO, SAY AREA WOMAN AND NEWS TABLOID." That was the beginning of Mrs. Welling's ame, but it was not until June 28th hat the *Weekly World News* told her whole story. In thousands of supermarkets, the issue appeared with a big

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front-page picture of Mrs. Welling and a headline in type an inch and a half high proclaiming "I'VE SEEN ELVIS IN THE FLESH!" The story began to be picked up by newspapers around the country as a brightener to the increasingly monotonous accounts of the pre-Convention Presidential campaigns. CBS investigated it for possible production on "60 Minutes." Radio stations from coast to coast and as far away as Australia called to interview Louise Welling and anyone else they could find. Kalamazoo's mayor, Edward Annen, reacted to all this by announcing to a *Gazette* reporter, "I've told them that everyone knows this is where he lives and that they should *send their residents here* to spend tourist dollars to find him."

Funny signs sprouted throughout Kalamazoo and Vicksburg in places of commerce. A rival market of Felpausch's posted one that said "JIMMY HOFFA SHOPS HERE." A dentist boasted, "ELVIS HAS HIS TEETH CLEANED HERE." At Mar-Jo's, the sign read "ELVIS EATS OUR MEATLOAF." The folks at Felpausch's, however, were not amused. Cecil Bagwell, then the store's manager, told the *Gazette*, "The cashier who supposedly checked out Elvis that day cannot remember anything about it," and characterized Mrs. Welling as "an Elvis fanatic." Bagwell no longer works at Felpausch's, but I spoke with Jack Mayhew, the assistant manager, who scowled when I brought up the subject. "I won't comment," he said, adding, nonetheless, "We've never given the story to anyone, and we're not going to. All I'll say is that the woman is totally—" and he rotated an extended finger beside his head.

Before I left Mrs. Welling that morning, I asked her why she thought it was that *she* had seen Elvis, when others had not—did not even believe her.

"I don't know, but the Lord does," she answered. "I'm a religious woman, and when things like this happen—that we don't understand—it just proves that the Lord has a plan."

THE next day, a friend who had heard about my investigations telephoned to tell me that there had been an Elvis sighting just a week or so earlier, in Kalamazoo, at the delivery bay of the Fader Construction Company, which is owned by her family.

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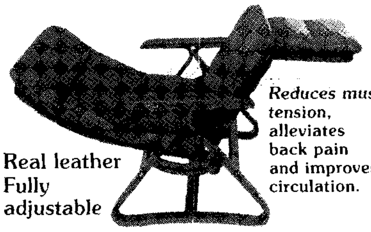

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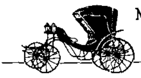

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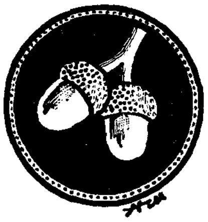
She hadn't seen the man herself, she said, but the women in the office had insisted that the truck driver making the delivery was Elvis Presley. I suspected that it might have been Ray Kajkowski, winner of the Elvis-look-alike contest and kisser of Jean Delahanty. This turned out to be true. On Friday evening, at a run-through for the Old Car Festival's cruising event, I was introduced to Kajkowski by Skip Knowles, and Kajkowski confirmed that he had made quite a stir while delivering a shipment of concrete forms to Fader. He gave me his card—he has apparently made a second career for himself as an Elvis impersonator at parties and night clubs—and then he whipped out a pair of mirrored sunglasses, put them on, and kissed me, too. "Young, old, fat, skinny, black, white, good-looking, not so good-looking, I kiss them all," he said. "I'm a pretty affectionate fellow. I was raised in a family that hugged a lot."



Ray Kajkowski lives in Gobles, not far from Vicksburg. At forty-one, he is thick-featured, a bit on the heavy side, and looks like—well, he looks like Elvis Presley. He has big sideburns and dyed black hair, which he wears in a pompadour. He went down to Graceland recently with his wife and his two teen-age sons to study the Presley scene and recalls that while he was in the mansion's poolroom a couple came in and the wife took one look at him and collapsed on the floor in a faint.

"When I was growing up, I felt like an outsider," he told me. "I didn't think I was as good as other people, because my dad wasn't a doctor or a lawyer. We were just common folks. I knew about Elvis even when I was a little kid. I didn't pay much attention, though, except that some of my buddies had pictures of Elvis, so we'd trade those to our older sisters and their friends for baseball cards." He aughed.

"I felt like we were invaded when he Beatles came over," he continued. "By that time—1963—he was at Cenral High School in Kalamazoo, and had begun to appreciate Presley's music and to defend it against foreign stars. "I mean, Elvis was a small-town boy who made good. He was just ordinary, nd, sure, he made some mistakes, just ike me or you or any of us. But he went from zero to sixty. He had charisma with a capital 'C,' and somehow people still know it."

After Presley's death, Kajkowski said, he felt sad and started reading about Elvis and studying his old movies. "Then, in September or October, 1987, right around then, I was at a nineteen-fifties dance in Gobles. My hair was different then, and I had a beard, but there was a fifty-dollar prize for the best Elvis imitator. Fifty bucks sounded pretty good to me, and I watched this one guy do an imitation, and he didn't move or anything, and I thought to myself, I can do better than that, so I got up and entered and won, beard and all. After that, I shaved off my beard, dyed my hair, and started building my act. I do lip-synch to Elvis tapes. I've got three suits now, one black, one white, one blue. My wife does my setups for me and runs the strobe lights. Evenings when we don't have anything else to do, we sit around and make scarves for me to give away. I cut them, and she hems them. When I'm performing, I sweat real easy, and I mop off the sweat with the scarves and throw them out to the gals. They go crazy over them. And the gals proposition me. They don't make it easy. Sometimes they rub up against me, and when I kiss them they stick their tongues halfway down my throat. Once, I went over to shake the guys' hands, because I figured it was better to have them on my side. But one big guy wouldn't shake my hand, and later he came over and grabbed me like a grizzly bear and told me to quit it. 'You don't sound like Elvis Presley. You don't look like Elvis Presley. Stop it.' I told him, 'Hey, it's all lip-synch! It's just an act! It's entertainment!' But I try to keep it under control. My wife's the woman I have to go home with after the act."

I asked Kajkowski if he had ever been in Felpausch's. As a truck driver, he said, he had made deliveries there; occasionally, he even shopped there. But although he owned a motorcycle, he said, he rarely drove it, and he never wore a white motorcycle suit.

I asked him what he made of Mrs. Welling's story.

"Well," he said thoughtfully, "when someone puts another person at the center of their life, they read about him, they think about him, I'm not

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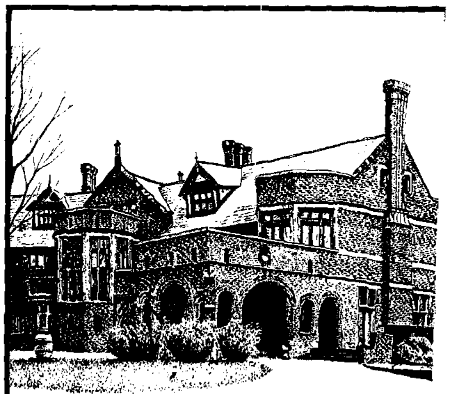
surprised that he becomes real for that person."

Saturday night, at nine o'clock, Louise Welling is standing next to me in the Filling Station's parking lot—it is built on the site of John Vickers' flour mill—in a crowd that has just seen prizes awarded in the fifties dance concert and is waiting for the beginning of the second annual Elvis-look-alike contest. She is neatly dressed in a blue-and-white checked overblouse and dark pants. Her hair is fluffed up, and she is wearing pretty pink lipstick. She invited me to come to the contest, and told me that although many of the entrants in such affairs didn't come close to Elvis she was hoping that this one would draw the real Elvis Presley out from hiding. "If he came to me in the past, I believe he'll come again," she said. "I hope it will be before I die. If he comes, I'm going to grab him and hold on to him and ask him why he couldn't just be honest about needing to get away for a rest. Why couldn't he just tell the truth? Look at all the trouble he's caused those who love him."

Earlier in the day, I stopped in at Mar-Jo's for coffee. There were lots of extra visitors in the café. Ken Fowler had turned on the radio to WHEZ, a Kalamazoo station, which was broadcasting live from out on the street, acting as the festival's musical host. Rock music filled the café. Patrons were beating time on their knees, and the waitresses had begun to boogie up and down behind the counter. I asked one of them—a girl named Laurie, who was decked out fifties style with a white floaty scarf around her ponytail—what she made of Mrs. Welling's story. "I think it's kind of fun," she said. "I haven't met the lady, but, you know, maybe she's right. After all, if Elvis Presley never died he has to be someplace."

Mrs. Welling is subdued, as she stands next to me, but all attention—scanning the people, anticipatory. We are at the very back of the good-natured crowd, which has enjoyed the nostalgia, the slick cars, the dances, the poodle skirts, and the ponytails. She spots Kajkowski and says to me that he's not Elvis but "so far he's the only one here who even looks anything like him."



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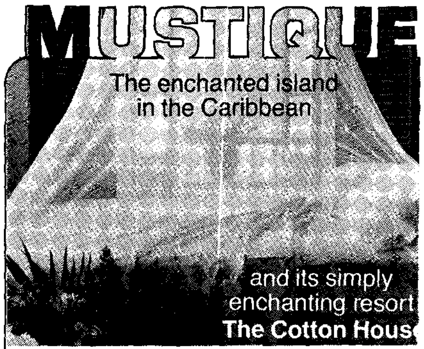

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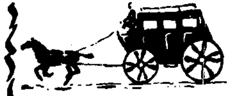

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Skip Knowles is up on the stage, in charge of what has turned out to be a successful event. There have been record-breaking crowds. Six hundred and fifty cars were entered. He has had plenty of media coverage, and he seems to be having a very good time. He calls for the Elvis contest to begin. Ray Kajkowski's act is so good now that he has no competition—he is the only one to enter. I watch him play the crowd. He had told me, "When I first started, I really liked the attention, but now it's just fun to do the show, and, yeah, I do get caught up in it. I like the holding power I have over people. I know how it is to feel left out, so I play to everyone. But I like people in their mid-thirties or older best. I don't like to entertain for these kids in their twenties. The gals back off when I try to drape a scarf around them. I think that's an insult." Now he is dancing around the edge of the crowd, reaching out to kiss the women, who respond to him with delight and good humor, and then he launches into what Mrs. Welling tells me is "You're a Devil in Disguise." I look at her, and she seems near tears. Her shoulders slump. "I don't like to watch," she says softly, and walks away to gather her family together for the trip home.

ON my own way home, on the morning after the festival, I made one final stop in Vicksburg, on the south side of town, at what is left of Fraser's Grove. For about forty years —up until the early nineteen-twenties —Fraser's Grove was one of this country's premier spiritualist centers. In 1883, Mrs. John Fraser, the wife of a well-to-do Vicksburg merchant, turned the twenty-acre woodland into a camp and gathering place for mediums, believers in mediums, and the curious. She had been inspired by a lecture on spiritualism given in a hall on Prairie Street by one Mrs. R. S. Lily, of Cassadaga, New York, a town in the spiritually fervent "burned-over" district of that state. In the years that followed, Mrs. Fraser became a national figure in séance circles, and another resident of Vicksburg, C. E. Dent, was elected president of something called the Mediums' Protection Union. A group calling itself the Vicksburg Spiritualists was formed shortly after Mrs. Lily's visit, and it met each Sunday. Its Ladies' Auxiliary held monthly chicken dinners (fifteen cents a plate, two for a quarter). On summer Sunday afternoons, people from around this country and abroad packed the campground at Fraser's Grove to talk of materialization and reincarnation and watch mediums go into trances to contact the dead. According to a 1909 issue of the Vicksburg *Commercial*, they debated subjects such as "Is the planet on which we live approaching final destruction, or is it becoming more permanent?" (A follow-up article reports that the Spiritualists opted for permanency.)

Trees still stand in much of Fraser's Grove, although some of them have been cut down to make room for a small housing development. The campground itself has been taken over by the Christian Tabernacle, which makes use of the old camp buildings. Tazzie, my German shepherd, was with me, and I parked at the edge of the grove to let her out for a run before we drove onto the interstate highway. We headed down a dim path, where events passing strange are said to have taken place. The grove produced no Elvis, no John Vickers, not even a phantom band concert or the apparition of Mr. Matz—no spirits at all. But Tazzie did scare up a rabbit, and the oaks were still there, and, untamed through a hundred and fifty generations, so were the mosquitoes.

—SUE HUBBELL

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The Fitzgerald fishery continues to fall off, as this year's small catch shows. With the exception of four showpieces—bibliographic, biographic, deconstructive, and thematic—fewer and fewer scholars and critics are taking their best gear to work Fitzgerald's waters. In contrast, Hemingway scholars are riding full tides to port with their harvests. Along with a major biography, a new collection of Hemingway's stories, and two collections of criticism, one flotilla of scholars took their nets to Hemingway's *The Garden of Eden* while another took theirs to Hemingway's Spanish Civil War period. The year's writing landed a few trophies—among them an essay on *The Sun Also Rises* by a pair of deconstructionists. But Hemingway scholars still show little venturesomeness, reluctant to ply currents with the tackle of recent critical theories. Unlike last year's scholars, who clustered to fish the channel of *The Sun Also Rises*, this year's fanned out, landed more small fry than large, and, for several, found themselves lured by the siren call of the newest sea-creature in Hemingway's depths, Androgyny.

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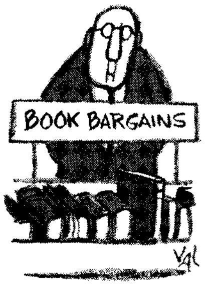
BOOKS

A Deeper Reality

THE title of George Kennan's new book—"Sketches from a Life" (Pantheon; $22.95)—is just right. Most of the pieces in this collage belong to neither the diary nor the memoir genre, and are indeed sketches in prose—impressionistic, carefully wrought, and covering sixty-one years in the experience of a man who is now eighty-five, and who knows about real sketching, because he does that, too. A chance encounter in 1928 with a volume of travelogues by Alfons Paquet, a half-French, half-German journalist, inspired Kennan to adopt this singular form of writing as a model. "What I thought I learned from it," he says of Paquet's book, "was that there was nothing wholly meaningless in life, and that in all scenes observed in remote places . . . there was normally and quite literally 'more than met the eye'—a deeper reality seldom visible on the surface but there to be sensed, if not seen, with the requisite intuition and effort."



Kennan made the effort day in and day out. His sketches offer a clear and rounded view of deeper realities—as he saw them, that is. Kennan is well travelled, and he has remarkable descriptive powers, which do not falter at any stage of the six decades he writes about; he imparts a strong flavor of a place's look and feel while reaching still further as he etches its character and experience. Actually, "travelled" isn't the right word, because Kennan lived in some of the places he sketches—Hamburg, Berlin, Riga, Moscow—and he returned to others, like Leningrad, from time to time, almost as if he had to; from the start, those places gave him a sense that he had lived in them in some earlier life.

Some admirers (not all of them foreign-policy buffs) will be disappointed not to find echoes of Kennan's two volumes of memoirs, in which his thoughts on great-power politics and how to deploy, and how not to deploy, America's vast might and authority were lucidly stated. Except for the curious inclusion of excerpts from a dispatch from Moscow written in July of 1952, while he was Ambassador there, the sketches show nothing of Kennan's views or insights on political topics (though his loathing of the Soviet state does surface now and then).

Kennan's memoirs enlarged the impression gained from the rest of his œuvre of an extraordinarily accomplished and versatile man, who distinguished himself in multiple careers. In his day, he was the country's best-known diplomat, only partly because he was its most controversial. He then became a widely respected historian, who has produced eighteen first-rate books. Kennan seems now to have led a double life. Except while he was serving in especially sensitive jobs in Washington, he was busily executing sketches; although he says in a prefatory note that he hadn't considered publishing them until very recently, when a friend suggested that he do so, the material is meticulously written, as if it had always been intended for publication. It shows Kennan's sensibilities to be as keen—and as fragile—as his culture is wide. The sketches starkly confirm hints found elsewhere, notably in the memoirs, of a deeply anomalous figure. He occasionally describes himself as weak and tentative, if not uncourageous, yet he is perhaps best known for having taken positions on policy issues which went against the prevailing current—and once he had taken them he didn't budge, whatever the damage to his career. For at least the latter half of the period covered by the sketches, Kennan brooded about having been born out of his time. Thirty years ago, in Hamburg, he reflected that a man's life had become "too long a span today for the pace of change," and explained, "If he lives more than half a century, his familiar world, the world of his youth, fails him like a horse dying under its rider. . . . The Western world, at least, must today be populated in very great part by people like myself who have outlived their own intellectual and emotional environment, and who are old not only in the physical and emotional sense but also in relation to the time. We older people are the guests of this age, permitted to haunt its strange and somewhat terrifying halls—in a way part of its life, like the guests in a summer hotel, yet in a similar way detached from it." When Kennan wrote that passage, he was only fifty-five years old; much new experience and much distinction lay ahead of him.

The nature of anyone's private reflections may be ignored as long as they do not seep outside a circle of family and intimate friends. Like anything else, however, once published, they are held up to the light. Kennan's metaphor of the summer hotel points up the melancholy that heavily marks the tone and the substance of his sketches. They vindicate and go well beyond a premonitory passage in the early pages of his memoirs: "I lived, particularly in childhood but with lessening intensity right on to middle age, in a world that was peculiarly and intimately my own, scarcely to be shared with others or even made plausible to them. I habitually read special meanings into things, scenes, and places—qualities of wonder, beauty, promise, or horror—for which there was no external evidence visible, or plausible, to others. My world was peopled with mysteries, seductive hints, vague menaces, 'intimations of immortality.' "

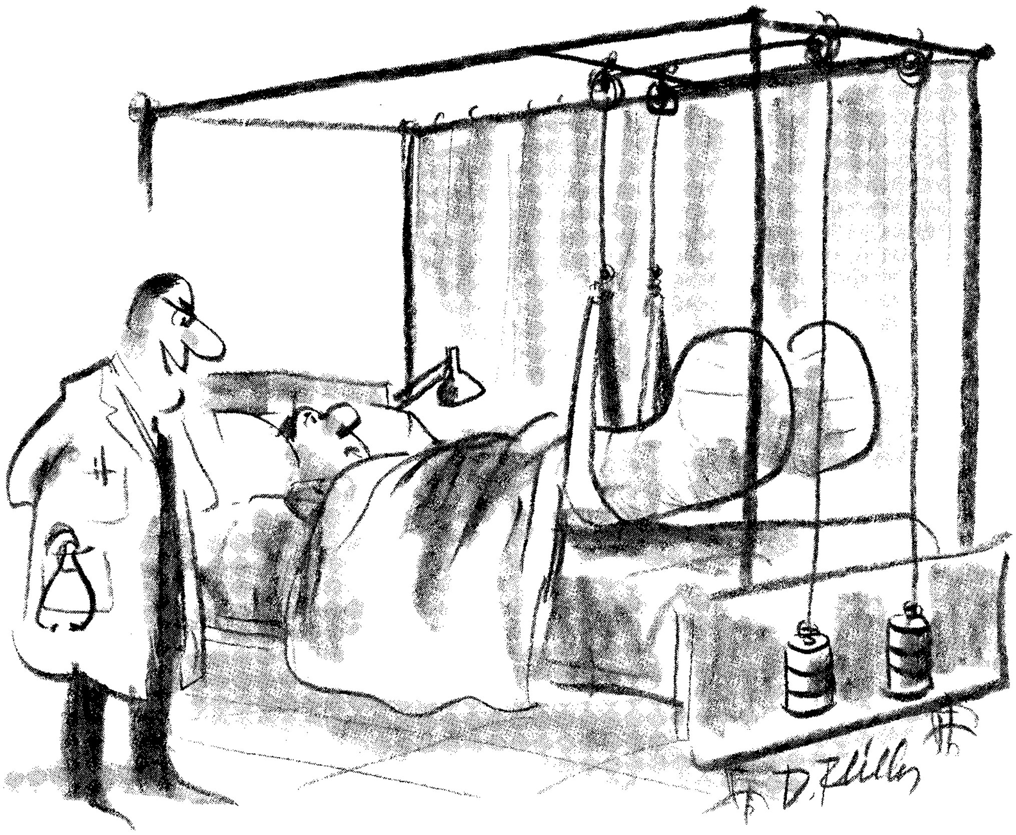
OCCASIONALLY, the melancholy and the pessimism of the sketches are broken by Kennan's homage to greatness—in architecture and in literature—and to the majesty of nature He is a sailor; he loves the sea, and he loves Norway, his wife's native land and the country he seems to think he ought to have lived in or be living in He also cherishes simplicity when he encounters it, notably in the unchanging ways of farming people and th continuities they represent. Change o almost any kind is what he seems mos to deplore. He sees only the dark side o technological change, and of the gadgets that most people crave becaus they think, rightly or wrongly, tha having them makes being alive mor agreeable. Kennan deals admirabl with greatness, but he cannot relat to, or even understand, the ordinary

Many would go partway with him—agree, for example, that the motorcar is the natural enemy of man. But to rail against the car over decades and to persist in feeling that what some call progress has condemned most people to purely vicarious experience is further evidence of Kennan's extreme pessimism and, I would say, confusion. "Vicarious" is his word, and he uses it often, especially in his comments on life in America. In describing a Sunday morning in a motel in a university town he is visiting, he sees desolation everywhere: "Not a sign of actual life except, here and there, a moving car, its occupant likewise walled off against nature in his own tiny, lonely, air-conditioned world. Not a touch of community; not a touch of sociability. Only the endless whirring and roaring of the air conditioners, the wild wasting of energy, the ubiquitous television set, the massive bundle of advertising pulp that masquerades under the name of a Sunday newspaper. All unnatural; all experience vicarious; all activity passive and uncreative. And this wasteland extending, like a desert, miles and miles in every direction. A fine end-of-the-world we have created in the American city."

That passage was written in 1977. In 1938, nearly forty years earlier, Kennan, then thirty-four, travelled through his native Wisconsin and recorded a similar impression. He saw sidewalks deserted in the evening and "a steady stream of sleek, dark cars [that] flowed between them," of which he wrote, "Each car had its couple or its foursome inside, bent on pleasure—usually vicarious pleasure—in the form of a movie or a dance or a petting party. . . . There was no place where strangers would come together freely—as in a Bavarian beer hall or a Russian amusement park—for the mere purpose of being together and enjoying new acquaintances." Kennan found in this distinction "the sad climax of individualism, he blind-alley of a generation which had forgotten how to hink or live collectively." So disturbing was his insight that he "could not help but feel," he ays, "that one ought to welcome almost any social cataclysm, however painful, and however costly, that would carry away something of this stuffy individualism and force human beings to seek their happiness and their salvation in their relationship to society as a whole."

Kennan is harder on his own country than on others—partly, it appears, because he doesn't understand it. (There is a suggestion of this in the memoirs.) He sees and sometimes exaggerates its numerous defects but seems oblivious of its strengths—of the attributes that continue to draw people to its shores. As a diplomat and a historian, he came to know Russia and Germany intimately, and he understands their political cultures as well as anyone. Since leaving the State Department, Kennan has confined his professional involvement with America to diplomatic history and foreign policy. But that doesn't explain the sometimes censorious, sometimes patronizing tone he adopts for his reflections on the American scene. When he takes part in ceremonial occasions at universities, for example, he rarely finds anything that impresses him favorably. California strikes him as "one-dimensional, in the emotional sense," he writes, adding, "One wonders whether such a thing as anguish exists at all." A visit to the Air Force Academy, in Colorado Springs, exposes "the trashy, impermanent habitation of the American West—trailer camps, condominiums, commercial enterprises—but all strewn about, with wide expanses of useless, barren prairie between them; and everywhere, of course, the roads: these four-lane arteries of dark asphalt so dear to the modern American heart, stretching endlessly across the emptiness." He goes on, "Strange people, these Americans: they seek out such places as these, I suspect, not really to live but to await death . . . a sort of trancelike unreal state of existence . . . all enjoyments vicarious."

A holiday in the Florida Keys is just as dispiriting; no prospect pleases—not the sea, not the vegetation, and, apparently, not the laid-back style of the place, which has attracted a fair number of writers and artists. Kennan found there only impermanence and squalor: "I see these properties in my mind's eye, at some time in the future: crumbling ditches, silted and swampy, the remains of the houses littering their banks, identifiable in many instances only by their foundations, the remainder—everything, in fact—fallen victim to the hurricanes, the dampness, the insects, and the ultimate



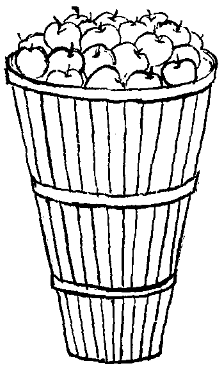
"You'll see—we'll have you up and litigating in no time!"

collapse of civilization as we know it."

There is a lot of this kind of thing, and one wonders how much importance, if any, to give to a comment he makes on a drive he took from Fez to Marrakech: "Suffering as I normally do from a form of myopia (similar to my color blindness) that makes it sometimes difficult for me to distinguish that which is picturesque from that which is simply dirty, sordid, and depressing, I left Fez with no inordinate spasms of regret."

Home for him, he observes, is "the whole great arc of the northern and western world." He sees himself as "a sort of Nordic cosmopolitan," and that no doubt explains why he reaches the top of his form when he is writing about Russia and Norway—Russia especially, and most especially Leningrad, which he evoked unforgettably in the opening pages of his book "Russia Leaves the War." It is "one of the strangest, loveliest, most terrible, and most dramatic of the world's great urban centers," he wrote. "In such a city the attention of man is forced inward upon himself and his own kind. Human relationships attain a strange vividness and intensity, with a touch of premonition." A walk in Leningrad offers Kennan glimpses of its past: "Of Pushkin and companion leaning on the embankment looking at the river; of Kropotkin exercising with his stool in the Fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul . . . of Prince Yusupov throwing the body of Rasputin into the Moika; of the crowd moving across the square toward the Winter Palace on the night the place was stormed. . . . I know that in this city, where I have never lived, there had nevertheless been deposited by some strange quirk of fate—a previous life, perhaps?—a portion of my own capacity to feel and to love, a portion . . . of my own life; and that this is something no American will ever understand and no Russian ever believe." His feeling for and sensitivity to a few Northern places may or may not help to explain the melancholy and the disconcertingly elegiac tone of various sketches. In seeing a daughter and a son-in-law off at an airport in Norway twelve years ago, he made "the usual observation about not knowing when I would ever see them again, and wanted to add 'Perhaps never,' but I didn't."

Kennan's feelings about the Foreign Service are, at best, ambivalent, and one wonders that he stayed with it; as a young officer, he nearly did resign. They were a peculiar match—Kennan and a government department. For him the life must have been intellectually limiting. And by the standards of a busy bureaucracy he might have seemed oversensitive—insufficiently hard-nosed. Still, as he says, his rise through the career service was the most rapid of anyone of his generation. But he recalls that when, in the spring of 1953, after he had had twenty-seven years of it, John Foster Dulles, the new Secretary of State, asked him to retire, he was unable to think of anyone to say goodbye to. He finally hit upon Mary Butler, a kind and unfailingly gracious person who for many years was the receptionist for the Secretary and his senior aides. No one who knew her would have questioned Kennan's choice, but it seems odd that none of his Foreign Service colleagues within the building struck him as equally appropriate. Odder still is the lasting quality of the grievance that Kennan drew from his disputes with higher authority. At the Washington summit conference in December of 1987, he was one of numerous notables who were invited to a reception at the Soviet Embassy, where he met Mikhail Gorbachev who paid an apt and generous tribute to Kennan's long association with the Soviet Union. Kennan, who was clearly moved, says he "reflected that if you cannot have this sort of recognition from your own government to ring down your involvement in such relationship, it is nice to have it at least from th one-time adversary." It's worth noting that Kennan wasn't the only senio diplomat who lost policy battles or wa injured to one degree or another by th anti-Communist hysteria of the lat nineteen-forties and early fifties. Moreover, few, if any, other American diplomats have been as widely honore and otherwise rewarded by institution of this country. And why not? In addressing the larger affairs of the world Kennan is the nearest thing to a sag that we've had.



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One hopes that this poetic, élitist, and prodigally gifted man found more pleasure than pain in his odyssey. The sketches do not leave that impression, however. And the reader is left to think that, despite a life filled with accomplishment, Kennan never quite found his way. —John Newhouse

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

Stars of the New Curfew, by Ben Okri (Viking; $17.95). A collection of six stories, set in a surrealistic modern Africa, by a Nigerian who lives in London and writes simple, arresting prose. One beleaguered character stumbles upon a strange village where some inhabitants have feet that face backward and others have wings but are unable to fly, and where the huts are mirrored on the outside. Everyone seems to be expecting him, and he is assured that all will be explained at a village meeting about life and death. "What life, what death?" he asks, arriving at the pure confusion that doubles as revelation in the hellish terrain these characters occupy. Monstrous military governors, unexplained violence, and the "rust and fire" of a cruel sun rule the land; yet Mr. Okri's stories are seldom too oppressive to give pleasure. Like fairy tales, they are as fabulous as they are sinister.

GENERAL

Travelers of a Hundred Ages, by Donald Keene (Holt; $35). Most of us in the West do not know much about Japanese "diary literature," and we should, because it is rewarding and delightful. Diary-keeping is a traditional and important genre in Japan, going back more than a thousand years. Priests, government officials, warriors, ladies of the court kept journals, recording day-to-day events, the annals of battle, gossip about exalted persons, private thoughts. The most compelling journals are those of the great writers, like the author of "The Tale of Genji," and the poet Bashō, who related to his diary the things that happened to him, in 1688, on a journey to a distant place to observe the moon. ("I cannot recall any European poet who traveled anywhere for the express purpose of seeing the

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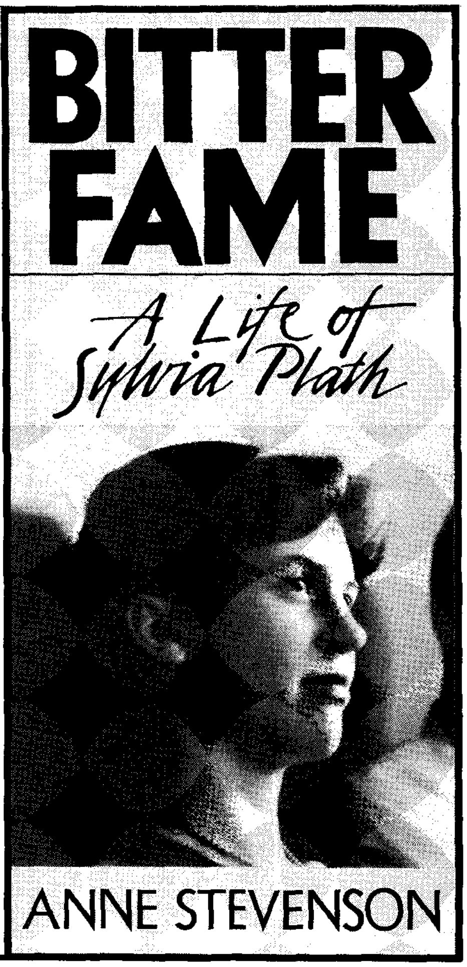

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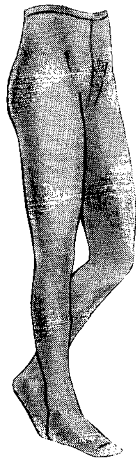

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moon there," Mr. Keene says.) One of the foremost Western authorities on Japanese literature, the author discusses more than sixty diaries. He quotes from the most notable, and includes many of the haiku that the poets composed for themselves. This is a book to keep at one's side and visit from time to time. A treasure.

MANHATTAN FOR RENT, *1785-1850*, by Elizabeth Blackmar (Cornell; $29.95). A scholarly study recounting how Manhattan's early development created a shortage of affordable housing, especially for working-class families, and how slum property became a profitable investment. In Colonial New York, even the most well-to-do merchant had his business in his home and his warehouse beside it, while an artisan sheltered his family, his workmen, and his workshop in the same building. In the period covered by this book, working and living spaces became separate, and so did select residential areas and neighborhoods of run-down multiple dwellings. The author enlivens her study with letters and memoirs by New Yorkers rich and poor, landlords and tenants, and she is adroit in recalling the role of women in the economies of both homes and businesses; there are sulky or exploited servants and scrimping boarding-house keepers, and there is also Janet Roosevelt Inderwick, who, in 1803, left her banker husband and moved to a boarding house. She regularly returned home, though, "to preside at dinners for his business associates. Her efforts paid off when in 1805 she became one of the city's wealthiest widows."

WAR NEWS: A YOUNG REPORTER IN INDOCHINA, by Robert Sam Anson (Simon & Schuster; $19.95). The author was a twenty-four-year-old reporter for *Time* when he was sent to Saigon, in 1969. Almost from the beginning, he was at odds with his editors and the hawkish management of the magazine for his openly expressed anti-war feelings, and soon he was exiled by his bureau chief to Cambodia, then considered a backwater. It happened that he arrived in Phnom Penh just as the war was spreading into Cambodia. Mr. Anson's tour there was climaxed by his capture by the North Vietnamese and their then partners the Khmer Rouge. He expected death; his indulgent treatment by his captors and his release were something of a miracle, and the reason for it, when finally revealed, is the surprising dénouement of his story. Mr. Anson is a spirited, direct writer, with, he will admit, a touch of brashness. He skillfully re-creates the atmosphere of the war theatres and the abiding sense of danger among the foreign correspondents, and he also evokes the uneasy ambivalence of people like him about the war.

NOTE: "Big Sugar: Seasons in the Cane Fields of Florida," by Alec Wilkinson, has been published by Knopf ($18.95). Much of the contents originally appeared in *The New Yorker*.

MYSTERY AND CRIME

THE KING OF THE NIGHTCAP, by William Murray (Bantam; $16.95). Lou (Shifty) Anderson, the professional magician and horse-racing addict with whose antics Mr. Murray has so often entertained us, explains to a friend in this new amusement, "Events always seem to overwhelm me. . . . Maybe there's just something about me that attracts trouble." The events in this case include a fifteen-thousand-dollar winning ticket at Santa Anita and the disappearance of the trusted gofer sent to collect, and the trouble begins to simmer when Shifty follows the apparent absconder to Tijuana. There is at least one horse race worthy of Dick Francis, some sex as kinky as any contemporary taste requires, and an abundance of Mr. Murray's social-comment humor.

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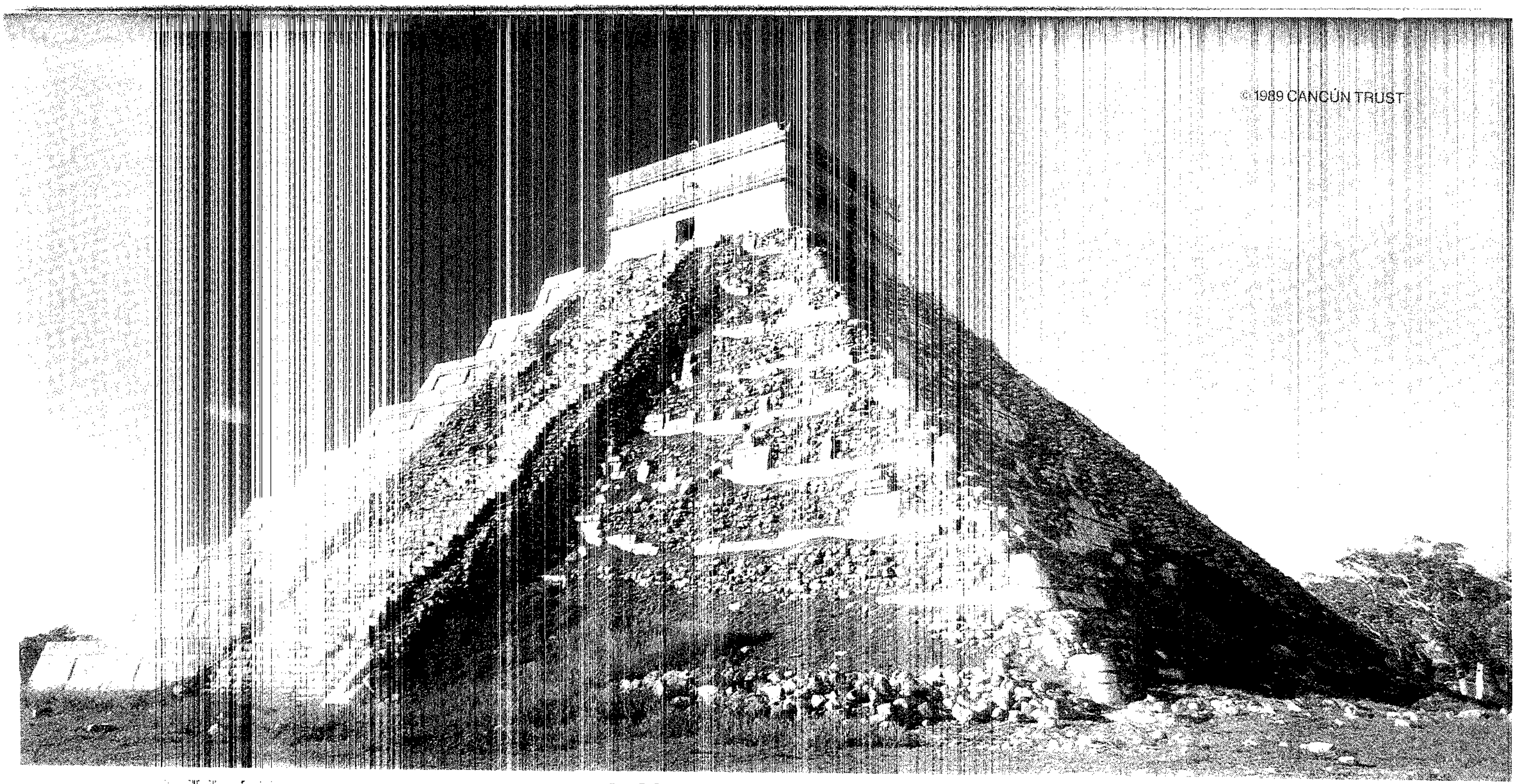
JOURNALISM AT LONG LAST COMES OF AGE

[*Illak Azeredo in the Ferndale* (*Calif.*) *Enterprise*]

Mattole Grange had its monthly meeting and, after the dinner, a slide show was presented by Jim Decker from the B.L.M. Mr. Decker attempted to point out what the B.L.M. wants to do to the mouth of the river. I really don't understand what is happening and, until I do, I don't think had better write too much about it.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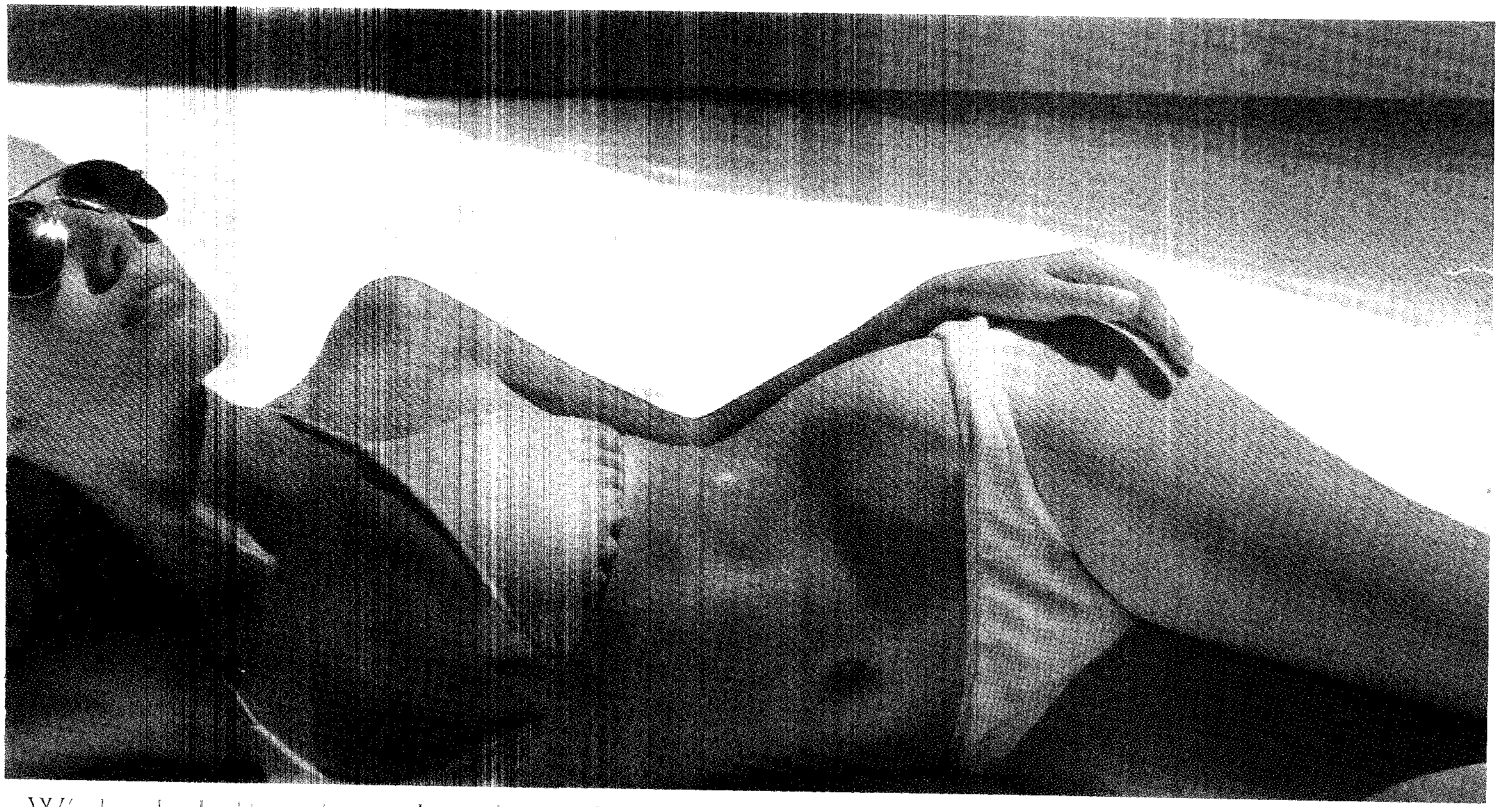

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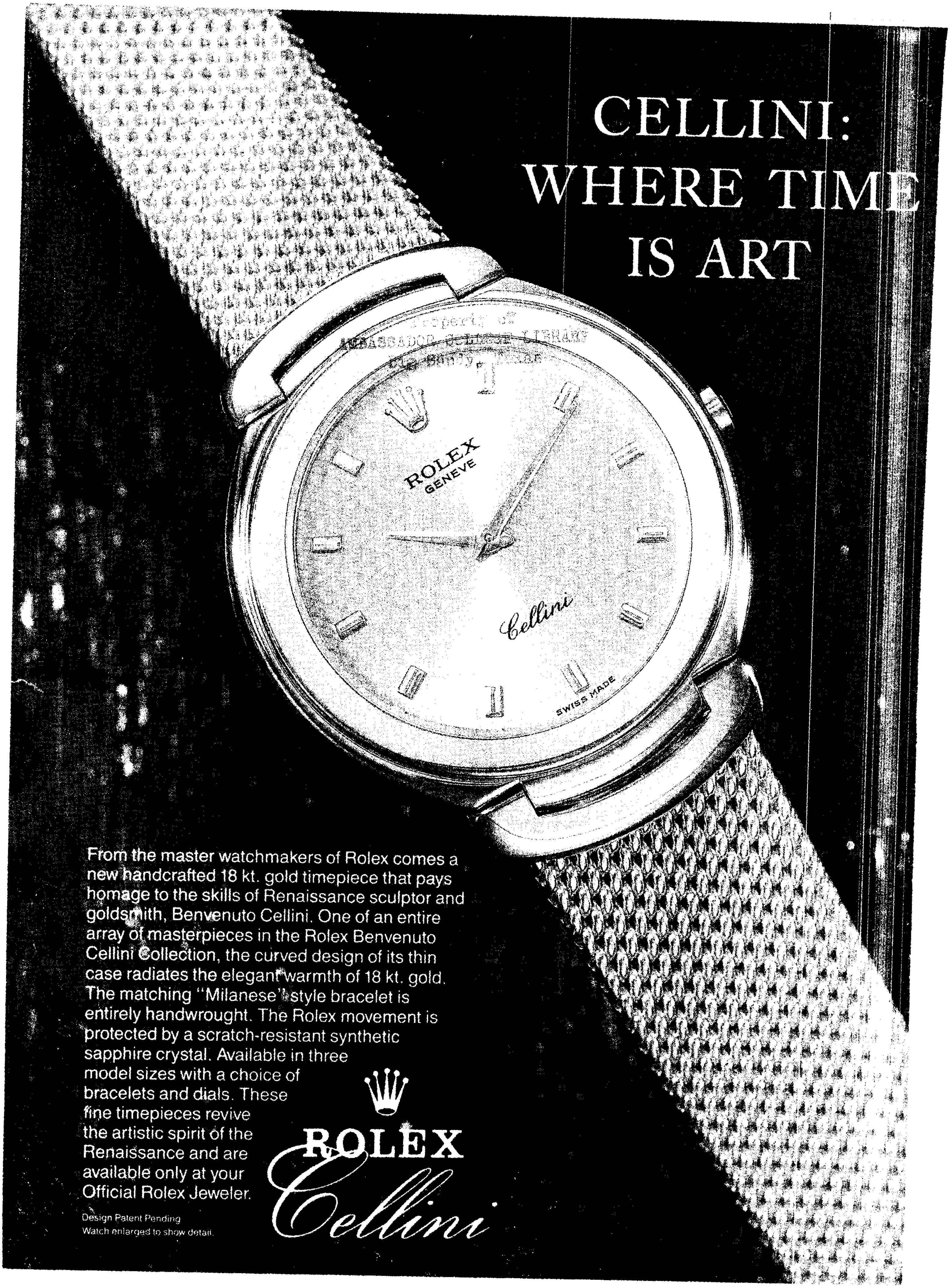

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